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New Statesman

I ♥ AMERICAN FOOTBALL

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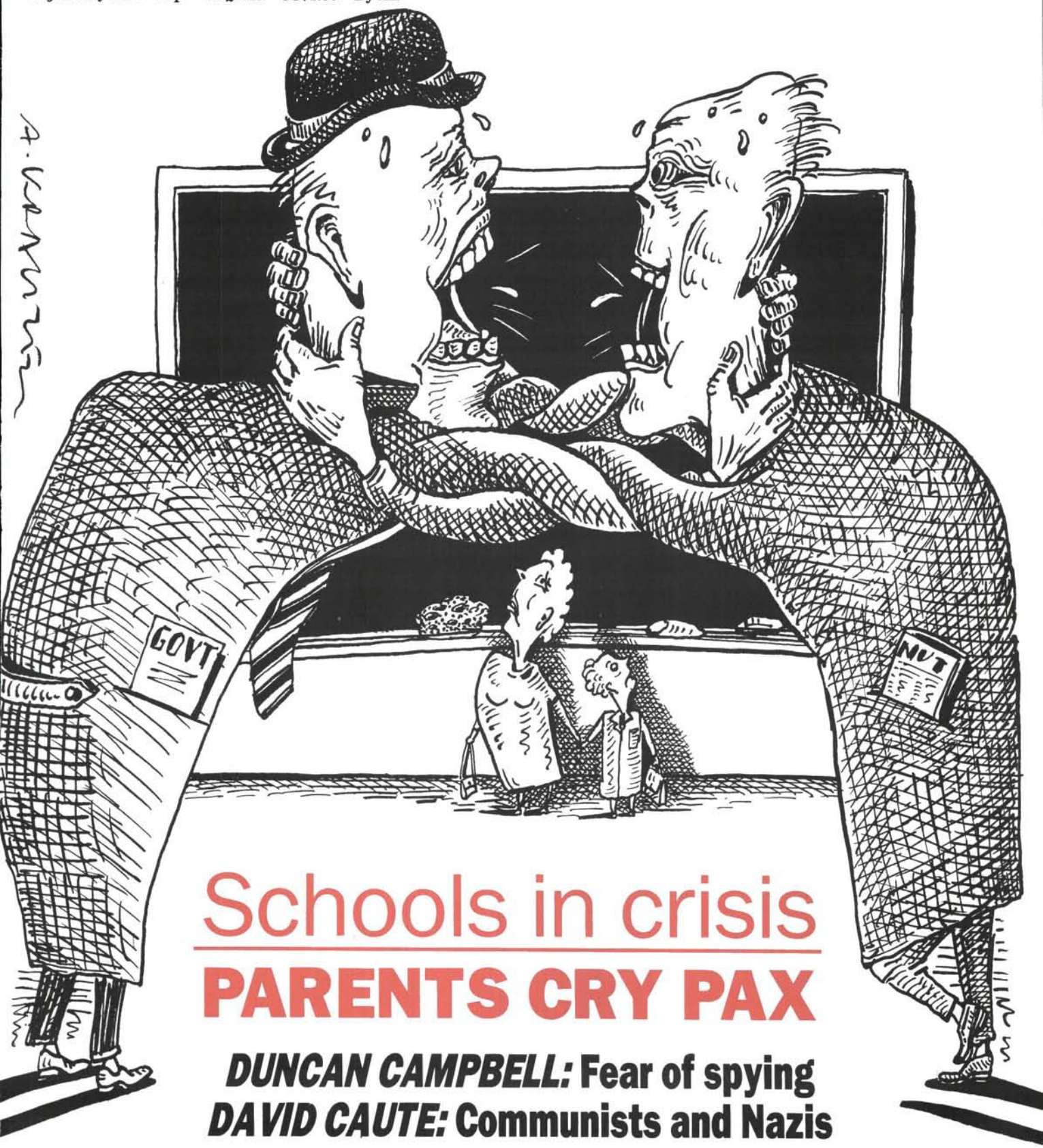

Schools in crisis

PARENTS CRY PAX

DUNCAN CAMPBELL: Fear of spying

DAVID CAUTE: Communists and Nazis

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In the right hands, one of these could save your life.

Deep in the almost impenetrable rain forests of the Amazon, where only the most intrepid explorer dares to tread, there grows a vine called *Chondrodendron tomentosum*.

From this, the South American Indian tribes have for centuries produced a deadly arrow poison which we know as curare.

It was noted as long ago as 1541 when the Spanish explorer, Francisco de Orellana, lost a companion after an Indian shot him with a curare-tipped arrow. "The arrow did not penetrate half a finger, but, as it had poison on it, he gave up his soul to our Lord."

Luckily for most explorers, the main purpose for which the Indians chose their poison was for hunting animals. When "injected" by a curare-tipped arrow, their prey could still be eaten quite safely since the poison is not effective when taken by mouth.

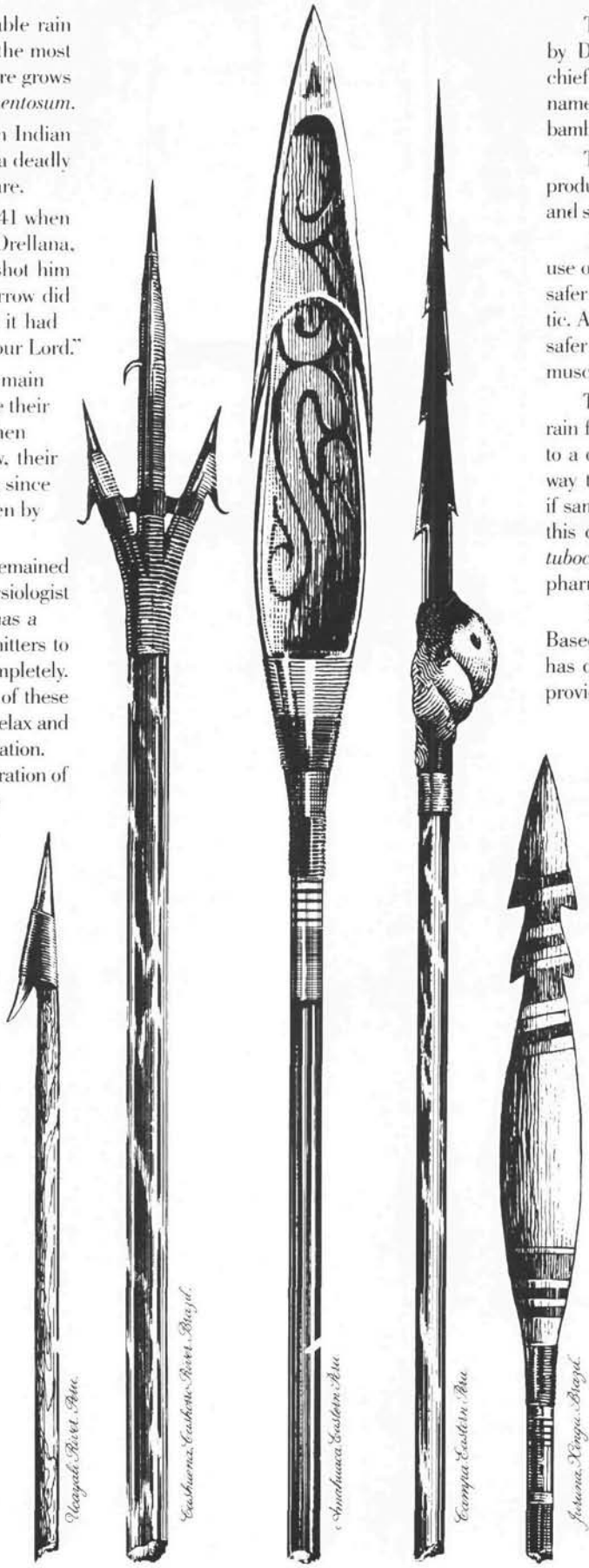
Exactly how this poison works remained a mystery until 1842, when the physiologist Claude Bernard discovered that it has a blocking action on the neuro-transmitters to the muscles, which then relax completely. For the unfortunate recipient of one of these arrows, the respiratory muscles also relax and death soon occurs through asphyxiation.

The secret process for the preparation of curare was not recorded in accurate detail until 1812, when Charles Waterton, a somewhat eccentric naturalist, set out with the avowed intention of obtaining a sample of this deadly poison.

He described how the Indians made curare and noted the inclusion of ants and two snakes, although it was obvious that the main ingredient was a vine.

He also reported an ingenious method of rating its potency. If a monkey hit by a poisoned dart was able to jump no further than the next tree before falling dead, it was "one-tree curare" and a very good brew. If the monkey made it as far as two or even three trees, then it was given the lower rating of "two" or "three-tree curare." (Much to the monkeys' relief, modern chemical methods of assaying curare are far more precise.)

It was not until the completion of experiments conducted by Waterton that curare was seriously considered for medical use.



This was finally made possible in 1935 by Dr. Harold King, when he isolated the chief paralysing ingredient of curare. He named it *tubocurarine* after the traditional bamboo tube which the poison was packed in.

This "chemical milestone" meant that the production of curare could be standardised and safely tested.

Eventually, this led to the revolutionary use of the drug in making anaesthesia much safer by permitting lower doses of anaesthetic. And it made abdominal surgery much safer and simpler by rendering the stomach muscles flaccid.

Today, the vine is still collected in the rain forests where the extract is boiled down to a dark, treacly resin. This then makes its way to Peru by mule and light aircraft and, if samples prove satisfactory, it is shipped to this country where the manufacture of *tubocurarine chloride* is carried out by the pharmaceutical industry.

But the industry has not stopped there. Based on experience with *tubocurarine*, it has developed some new muscle relaxants providing a comprehensive range for today's more advanced surgical techniques.

The modern-day use of these drugs in the operating theatre is the result of the combined efforts of botanists, physiologists, pharmacologists, South American Indians of yesterday, their descendants in Ecuador and Peru and, of course, the pharmaceutical industry.

It is through this kind of international co-operation that the British pharmaceutical industry is able to contribute to world health. And, in turn, to contribute to the financial health of this country.

The industry's exports in 1984 were worth over £1,200 million, giving a net balance of trade of some £680 million. (Projected exports for this year are £1,400 million.)

Were it not for the investment which this industry is able to make in research, these figures would not have been so impressive. And these arrows may never have fallen into the right hands.

If you would like to find out more about the British Pharmaceutical Industry, please write to: Dr. John Griffin, The ABPI, 12 Whitehall, London SW1A 2DY.

abpi

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry.

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New Statesman

Cover drawing: Andzrej Krauze

Parents go critical
Everyone agrees: the teachers have a case and the government is stingy. But if the children suffer, parents may turn on the NUT reports
BARRY HUGILL 10

HOME

Peter Kellner: Another good argument for tactical voting 9
John McIlroy: After the schools, it's the universities' turn to crack 11
Richard Kinsey: Tories privatise crime 12
Christian Wolmar: What has only 66 days left to live? 14

FOREIGN

Phillip van Niekerk: Apartheid is dead, long live apartheid 18
Phillip Whitehead: Interview with Rajiv Gandhi 19
Jonathan Mirsky: China's latest U-turn 20

WEEKEND

Duncan Campbell: Are you being watched? Yes, and it's worse than you think 22

BOOKS

David Caute: Communists in Nazi Germany 25
Jeremy Black: England in the 18th century 26
Carol Rumens: Poem 26
Shorter reviews 27
Geoff Dyer: Fiction 28
Aidan Foster-Carter: Brandt Report III 28

ARTS

John Coleman: Films 29
Stephanie Jordan: Dance 30
Andrew Clements: Rossini's *Moses* 30
Benedict Nightingale: Anne Devlin's *Ourselves Alone* 31
Julia Pascal: Theatre in Israel 32

BACKCHAT

Huw Richards: American college football 32
Naseem Khan: Work in progress on a miners' pantomime 33
Hugo Williams: Television 34
Weekend competition 35
Crossword 35

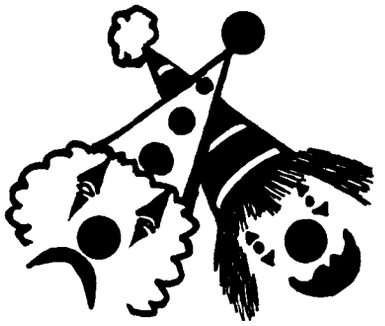
PLUS

Scrutiny 8
Mediawatch: Joan Smith 16
Diary: Claudia Wright 17
Roger Woddis 17
Letters 21
John Minnion 21
Janis Goodman 39
Chess: George Botterill 39
Quiz 39

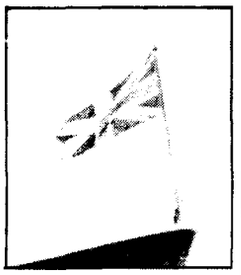
NEXT WEEK

BEAST KILLS DOG FIEND'S GIRL, 19
SHOCKER OVER TV ORGY
Fury of neighbours
STREET BED BRAWL

RIVERS OF BLOOD
Fleet St's incredibly violent headline language analysed by DAVID KEEN



BRING ON THE CLOWNS
NASEEM KHAN goes to the circus



EAST OF ADEN
There's more at stake than the Queen's yacht in South Yemen. FRED HALLIDAY casts a critical eye on the conflict

MURDER IN THE FAMILY
MICHAEL GOLDFARB reviews the account of a notorious American patricide

THE DEATH OF THE LIONS
Short story by PHIL EDWARDS

New Statesman

Vol 111 No 2861 24 January 1986

Barbed wire becomes the sign of the times

FLEET STREET managements and unions have gone to the edge of the precipice so often in the last ten years that the confrontations even seem to have developed their own blasé protocols. But this time it really looks different. This time it looks as if there is going to be a real shoot-out between Rupert Murdoch and the two key print unions, the NGA and SOGAT '82, and between those two unions and the electricians who are trying to pirate their jobs.

Every title in Fleet Street has had serious industrial trouble in those ten years, as managements tried individually to introduce new technological production processes and lower staffing levels, having failed in their earlier attempt to do so collectively. The most spectacular disaster in the series was at *The Times* and *Sunday Times*, where the previous owners provoked a lockout at the end of 1978 that lasted a year, cost £40 million and achieved nothing.

New technology and economic staffing levels have long been introduced elsewhere in British printing, but Fleet Street has remained a paradigm for all that is worst in British industry. In the media the picture portrayed is one of thuggish unions protecting indefensible working practices and extortionate wage levels. The reality is that the managements have got what they deserve — and that in the case of Fleet Street the managements, almost without exception, have been weak, incompetent and short-sighted.

These failings have been compounded by periodic attempts to reassert something called 'the right to manage', which given the culture that they have collectively allowed to develop over the years have simply been laughable. If it were not for the fact that by their nature national newspapers are not subject to foreign competition, Fleet Street would long ago have gone to the wall, for it consists of a series of incompetently run small businesses.

So far as its industrial relations are concerned, the managements of Fleet Street, out of a mixture of laziness and weakness, years ago effectively sub-contracted their recruitment and personnel functions for printing staff to the Fleet Street branches of the unions involved. In the short-term it was so much simpler to work with casual labour supplied on demand by the union. It avoided all the administrative burden of having a large permanent staff and the personnel problems of holidays, sickness, pensions and the rest.

The result is that the bulk of printing and despatch in Fleet Street has depended on casual labour provided by the unions with the authority — and indeed the function — of line management completely eroded. In these circumstances, faced with managements who vacillated between weakness and bluster, the print unions have behaved entirely rationally in looking after the interests of their members.

SO WHAT is different this time, with Rupert Murdoch and his new non-Fleet Street printing plant at Wapping in East London? The answer is that several factors have come together to create a general feeling that major change in working practices can no longer successfully be resisted. One is the acceptance that Eddie Shah's new national daily *Today* is for real and that his lower cost operation will put further real pressure on those already in the field to act.

A second factor is that this same Eddie Shah has successfully used the Tory government's anti-union legislation in the courts in his

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dispute at Warrington, which makes it much more difficult for the unions to fight Rupert Murdoch across the whole range of his newspaper interests in this country because of the risk of being done for illegal 'secondary picketing' since Murdoch will claim that Wapping is a quite separate company. A third difference is that the electricians' union is evidently prepared to destroy union co-operation in the newspaper industry by signing 'single union' deals that poach jobs traditionally done by other unions. And finally there is the character of Murdoch himself, who has a thuggish determination that fully matches anything that there has ever been on the union side — and compared with which Robert Maxwell's performances at Mirror Group Newspapers have been the antics of a buffoon.

The Murdoch plot against the unions has been thoroughly laid over a long period. The stalking horse has been the suggestion that he was about to launch a new evening paper, the *London Post,* from Wapping. But even Murdoch would need *some* 'journos' to produce a newspaper and he does not seem to have been hiring any. Instead, printers and production experts have been secretly drafted down to Wapping to make the plant ready behind barbed wire for the *Sun*, the *News of the World, The Times* and the *Sunday Times* as required.

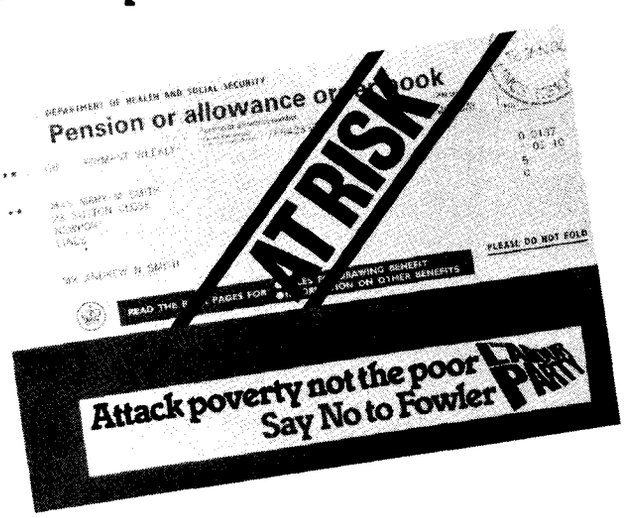
There is still a large element of gamble in the tactics that Murdoch has adopted. Even if the electricians continue to scab and to defy the flickering authority of the TUC, the existing capacity at Wapping is not enough to produce anything like huge print runs of the two Murdoch Sunday papers. Provided that the print unions at the *Sun*/*News of the World* and at the *Sunday Times* can find some way of keeping their industrial counter-action within the law, they could restrict the four Murdoch titles to what can be got out of Wapping for at least the year or so that it would take him to install extra capacity — and that would hurt Murdoch.

Production of *any* newspapers, of course, also depends on the willingness of enough journalists to co-operate with the Wapping operation and, presumably, to cross print union picket lines. In the past journalists have been the weak link when it comes to industrial action in Fleet Street, but the challenge this time is so flagrant that the response may be different.

This important bargaining position against Murdoch must be used by the unions to ensure that the changes that will eventually come in Fleet Street include fundamental changes in the way the newspapers are managed. The management style of Rupert Murdoch, with bully boys and barbed wire, is no more appropriate to the mid-'80s than the worst alleged past excesses of the unions.

Those unions have enough clout in this coming clash to insist that a new managerial climate and style is the price of their agreement to new working agreements. Otherwise nothing will have changed beyond the boot being for the time being on the other foot. □

Labour's campaign guide to the government's attack on Social Security is now available.



The guide includes briefings on Fowler's proposals plus leaflets, regional statistics and advice on organising petitions – an essential aid to campaigning.

Price £2 (plus 80p p+p) available from Labour Party Sales, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

Account or credit card holders may order direct from Labour Party Telesales 01-703 0901 (24 hours). Please quote ref no M-199-85.

Attack poverty not the poor Say No to Fowler LABOUR PARTY

Farrakhan, *Horizon* and Leo Abse

AS WE GO to press it hasn't been noticed in a Fleet St facing its own laryngitis that the BBC has banned yet another programme. This time it's a *Horizon* programme on Aids, nearly a year in the making, which was due to go out on BBC2 next month. It features nine gay men including two couples — and an 'out' gay psychiatrist — who tell how the arrival of Aids has affected their lives and relationships.

We haven't seen it. Those who have don't regard it as the best imaginable programme that could be made right now, within its own remit of letting a prime risk group talk for itself. But then what programme ever *is* the best imaginable? There is no explicit sex though there is some explicit talking. Any prophylactic campaign seeking to help contain Aids, including the forthcoming government one, is going to have to entail some sexual plainspeaking, as we have been stressing in the *New Statesman.*

So it can hardly be that, in the socially vital context of Aids, the BBC is frightened of allowing accurate sexual allusions on a showcase documentary — or can it? Winston Churchill Jnr's Obscene Publications Bill is aimed at 'sex and violence' on the box with a special eye to gay culture (as we demonstrated in *NS* 13 December 1985). We understand that the dropped programme hasn't been 'sent back' for real or spurious improvements. As of this moment, it has been killed.

Could it be that the essential offence isn't, or isn't only, that there's some plain language that might be unwelcome to Mrs Mary Whitehouse? The notable aspect of the programme is a lack of what the most preposterous right-wing critics of the media like to mis-call 'balance' — i.e., on this occasion, there are no evangelists, talking heads, or 'out' heterosexuals on-screen rebutting the points the gays choose to make.

It is a new debâcle that looks uneasily like another capitulation by public broadcasting to known Conservative perceptions (viz *Real Lives*). And that brings us to the Home Secretary's casual swatting of the proposed UK visit by the American black minister Louis Farrakhan. Anyone who has seen the *Newsnight* clips of Farrakhan at his Madison Square Garden rally in New York last year is unlikely to be impressed by his denials of anti-semitism.

But as we describe on p6 Jewish groups pursuing better liaison with the black community in this country aren't happy at the reflex banning, and not for the first time, of a controversial black American celebrity invited by black people here. Can black people not listen to their own? Comparably, can gays (and others) not listen to and watch their own?

Leo Abse, Labour MP for Pontypool, has just shown the country — and we are sorry to have to say it of him — what unredressed heterosexual comment on Aids can sink to. In *Time & Tide* he writes that 'narcissistic personality disorders afflict those whom we now recognise as potential Aids victims'. Will the BBC let us test that by showing *Horizon*? □

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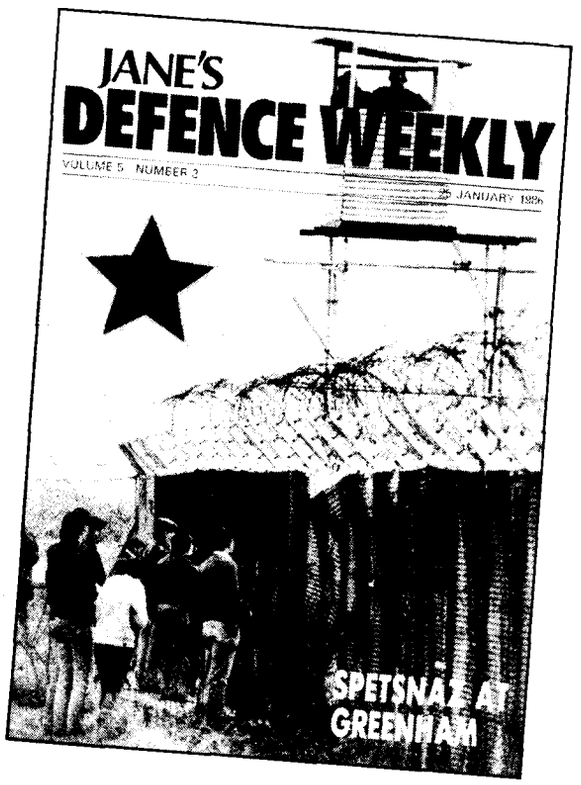
SPY SUSPECT PLANTED GREENHAM SPY STORY



Which of your friends is a Soviet agent? Answers in a sealed envelope to Spetznatz, c/o Red Army

THE ALLEGATION that Soviet agents have continuously infiltrated Greenham Common women's peace camp over the last two years emanates solely from an Israeli freelance defence consultant who is under investigation for espionage against the United States, report CLAUDIA WRIGHT and DUNCAN CAMPBELL

THE 'GREENHAM SPIES' report, written by Yossef Bodansky, was prominently publicised by the British magazine *Jane's Defence Weekly* on Monday. But *Jane's* news editor, Geoffrey Manners, admited the next day that no British source could corroborate the allegations.

Bodansky himself has been investigated for espionage by the FBI. According to the Israeli newspaper *Davar*, the FBI accused him of being the 'third man' in the Israeli spy ring in the US which was uncovered in November 1985.

Bodansky's alleged role was as a courier, helping to pass classified US documents to Tel Aviv. Until the November arrests, journalists who know him say he was proud to display the 'aura of Mossad [the Israeli secret intelligence service]' in his activities in the US.

Bodansky's story is dismissed as nonsense by defence officials in London and Washington. The Ministry of Defence does not take *Jane's* story seriously. In Washington, senior Pentagon officials called the story 'vintage Bodansky' disinformation; his claims, they said are 'not based on any official information at [the Pentagon]. Nor is it the [US] official view'.

Bodansky, an Israeli national currently living in Baltimore, is not employed by *Jane's*. He has written occasional reports for them about alleged Soviet military activities in Afghanistan, which are uncorroborated and claimed to be based on information from 'recent defectors'.

Bodansky does not hold US citizenship and — despite his claims to have had access to recent Soviet defectors — has no US security clearance. He 'does not have access to classified material', according to senior Pentagon officials.

Until March 1985, Bodansky was employed by a Massachusetts defence consultancy, Harold Rosenbaum Associates, on a Pentagon contract to study Soviet military exercises to see what they revealed about doctrine and tactics. But Bodansky's portion of the contract specifically excluded him from access to classified material.

Suspicions aroused

While this contract was running, US intelligence agencies became suspicious about Bodansky's background. An official investigation was conducted by the Defense Investigative Service (DIS), the Pentagon's own security department.

The conclusions of the DIS inquiry remain secret. But the award of a further contract to Bodansky to prepare a study of 'The Soviet Art of War' has been officially blocked since last summer. Following the uncovering of the Israeli spy ring, many Pentagon officials are now 'flatly opposed' to any further official dealings with Bodansky.

The spy ring investigation followed the arrest of US Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Jay Pollard, who is accused of passing classified information to Israel. Pollard and his wife are now in prison, awaiting indictment.

Bodansky refused to comment on the FBI investigations, when we contacted him this week. But when the *New Statesman* first drew attention to Bodansky's role in the Israeli spy case a month ago, *Jane's* professed not to be disturbed. 'Sometimes, stories are more or less uncheckable except by the person who wrote them', they said.

But even some aspects of Bodansky's story which could be checked, weren't. The article erroneously refers to the alleged agents as 'special forces', which in the Red Army means support troops like engineers. The term 'Spetsnaz' is short for 'Special Purpose Forces' which has a wholly different, SAS-like meaning.

Other parts of the article are self-contradictory. The article first claims that the alleged Greenham spies are a 'secret detachment of female Spetsnaz special forces agents'. Spetsnaz units are part of the Red Army; their personnel, Soviet citizens.

But the article then says that the women are 'trained agents from Warsaw Pact and West European countries, including the UK', who 'receive emergency cash via "dead drops"' and have been trained in the Soviet Union to 'act as "beacons" for other Spetsnaz and airborne troops'.

Soviet officials, like their British and American counterparts, have dismissed the *Jane's* report. But the 'revelations' may have an effect on Soviet intelligence work, nevertheless. Hitherto, the Soviets' most reliable open source of information about Western defence activities has been the detailed information published in military magazines — like *Jane's Defence Weekly*. ●

Additional research by Patrick Forbes and Jolyon Jenkins

Will child-minders be victims of the Social Security bill?

GOVERNMENT PLANS to scrap supplementary benefit could have disastrous consequences for Britain's child care system. If the Social Security bill, which is about to receive its second reading, becomes law, many poor parents may well find themselves unable to afford childminders or nursery places. And single-parents who earn a little extra a week as child-minders may well find that they are financially worse off if they continue childminding.

At present the cost of child care is allowed for when the amount of supplementary benefit a claimant is entitled to is calculated. But under the proposed legislation supplementary benefit will be replaced by income support, and no such allowance will be made.

Childminders receiving supplementary benefit are allowed to 'disregard' up to two thirds of their earnings to compensate for the costs of minding — heating, toys, food for the children. This will end with the introduction of income support with an earnings 'disregard' of only £5 (£15 for the long-term unemployed).

A disincentive to minders

Celia Smith, general secretary of the National Childminding Association, is convinced that this will prove a disincentive to many of the country's 51,000 registered minders. She is equally worried that many parents will no longer be able to afford child care.

Of even greater concern is the possibility that many would-be childminders would not register with their local authority and mind illegally. Registered minders rarely look after more than three children and receive back-up from social service departments. Illegal minders, by definition, do not declare their earnings and are subject to no controls.

Child care workers are desperately hoping that the legislation is not part of a Thatcherite plot to force women to stay at home looking after children but merely sloppy draughting. They are banking on Labour, Alliance and 'wet' Tory MPs forcing through an amendment at the Committee stage of the Bill.

Barry Hugill

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Politics of Aids Round-Up (2)

The muddled approaches to IV drug users

The Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA) and the Terrence Higgins Trust, both in the voluntary sector, this week launch the country's first advisory leaflet on Aids for injecting drug users. 50,000 copies will be given out through hospital drug-dependency units, street agencies and rehabilitation projects. The Home Office will send it to doctors who notify them of drug-using patients.

HTLV-3, the virus which can lead to Aids, still appears to be uncommon among injecting drug-users in England and Wales. The Public Health Laboratory Service has identified 24 HTLV-3 antibody-positive users in England and Wales out of 239 tested. However, these cases are spread throughout the country and are certain to increase. There are already more than 24 in Edinburgh, where more testing has been done. Across the Atlantic, more than 4,000 full-blown Aids cases are reported among injecting drug users. Aids containment has now replaced cocaine usage as the top priority of the US Alcoholism, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), the leading Federal agency in the field. In next year's Federal Aids budget ADAMHA will get $3.5 million, which matches the entire British budget for Aids-related health education.

The primary reason why drug users are at risk of Aids is the sharing of needles and syringes (which also spreads hepatitis). Needles get shared, according to a London survey, because clean ones aren't available when needed, or because they get 'mixed up' in a household. In the USA, and especially New York and New Jersey (which have 80 per cent of injection-related Aids cases), fear of being found in possession of equipment is also a factor. Users have gone to 'shooting galleries' where the drugs and the 'works' are supplied as a package deal — to be handed back for the next customer. It is by no means certain that increasing the supply of clean needles and syringes would in itself reduce the extent of needle sharing. However, restricting the supply *is* going to undermine any programme of education on the subject, for as long as the drugs themselves are readily available. Unfortunately, and as recently as June 1985, Britain's Pharmaceutical Association has insisted that its members should never sell syringes for anything other than *bona fide* therapeutic use.

Internationally there is a conflict between those who want a no-holds-barred attack on drugs and those who want to minimise the harm they do. A leaflet put out by Aids Project Los Angeles and the LA County Drug Abuse Program entitled *Shooting up and your health* was withdrawn by the latter after complaints by a member of the LA Board of Supervisors that it failed to condemn the injection of drugs as such, so strongly did it emphasise the need to avoid *sharing* equipment. The very fact that maintenance on oral methadone is sought by many drug users themselves seems to invalidate it in other quarters. Out of favour in Britain, but as it appears resurgent in the United States, the approach is condemned for bringing users no closer to independence of drugs. But the drug-dependent user is least rational when deprived of drugs, and if oral methadone in itself won't stop people injecting, it might at least take the edge off their desperation and give them sufficient lucidity to act on advice against sharing their 'works'.

Needle-sharing is not the only HTLV-3 risk to users. Heterosexual transmission of the virus, especially within the drugs sub-culture and from men to women, is increasingly well documented in the States. Many users, male and female, sell their bodies to finance their habits. Of 3,000 American women entering drug abuse treatment programmes, one third admitted current or former prostitution, of whom 95 per cent were injecting heroin users, according to the US National Institute of Drug Abuse, part of ADAMHA. As HTLV-3 spreads among injecting drug users, there needs to be less outlawing talk of 'junkies'. A thorough, open-minded and critical evaluation of policies towards users is needed, in which the actual and even sometimes the self-perceived needs of those people must come first.

Julian Meldrum

The address of the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA) is 1 Hatton Place, London EC1, phone 01-430 2341.

3941 miles away, Farrakhan can still make waves

'IT'S AN EXTREMELY delicate one,' says David Rosenberg, co-ordinator of the Jewish Cultural and Anti-Racist Project. He's speaking of Douglas Hurd's ban on the controversial black American Muslim minister Louis Farrakhan. 'It's quite clear that he's an anti-semite, and that his presence at meetings here would exacerbate friction between the black and Jewish communities. But at the same time we are concerned at the way the state has used its banning powers.'

Hurd couldn't have chosen a more effective way of embarrassing JCARP if he'd tried. As a GLC-funded project of the Jewish Socialist Group, it has long been campaigning against the immigration laws under which Hurd made the banning order. On the other hand it has also been working for effective anti-racist alliances between Jewish and black people and, says Rosenberg, 'Farrakhan's speeches could cause severe damage to that . . . I don't regret the fact that he has been banned.'

There's a sharp contrast, says Rosenberg, between the state's willingness to ban Farrakhan and its unwillingness to use its powers to expel Italian fascists here. JCARP is also concerned at the fact that the impetus for the banning came from the British-Israel Parliamentary Group: 'It's not their concern. The issue is nothing to do with Israel. It's to do with Jews here.'

AP

The demagogic minister

Farrakhan was invited by the Hackney Black People's Association, a 'pan-Africanist' community group funded by both Hackney council and the Department of the Environment. At the Association there's both anger that whites can tell blacks to whom they will listen, and a feeling of *deja vu*. Nearly two years ago, another of their guests — Stokely Carmichael, aka Kwame Ture — was refused entry at Heathrow on the personal orders of Leon Brittan.

Although the Association has refused to speak to the *Guardian*, its chair, Hackney Labour councillor Lester Lewis, was happy to explain to the *New Statesman* why Farrakhan was invited: 'I think black people would like to hear what he has to say for himself rather than read lies and distortions second hand.' Lewis denies that Farrakhan (whom he has met) is anti-semitic. For example: 'He has never said that Judaism is a dirty religion. *Newsnight* did a piece on him . . . check their recording and see, because he has never said that Judaism is a dirty religion. He said it was their *practices* that were dirty.' (On the *Newsnight* recording Farrakhan says: 'I never called Judaism a gutter religion. I said that the practice of lying, murder, stealing and deceit, and using God's holy name to shield your dirty religion. Not the practice of the scripture but your dirty practices using God's holy name.')

The Association is taking legal advice about fighting the ban. However, exclusion orders made personally by the Home Secretary carry no right of appeal.

Lewis argues that the banning shows exactly the same Jewish-Israeli lobby at work here as that which Farrakhan fights in America. 'They didn't consult a single black person. They are basically treating black people here with contempt.'

And he claims that the ban will be counterproductive: 'Because of the furore that has been created, far more people know of Farrakhan than has hitherto been the case and far more people want to know about him and what he has to say.' As he points out, audio and video cassettes of his speeches are widely available in Britain.

Jolyon Jenkins

How Shore made it home

PETER SHORE's victory in last Sunday's selection contest in Bethnal Green and Stepney resulted from the success of his supporters in winning nominations for Shore from seven of the constituency's nine wards.

Shore won on Sunday on the first ballot. He had 46 votes; the combined total of his opponents was 38. But those figures understate his support in ward votes. The table shows that in the eight wards that voted on whom to nominate as candidate, Shore received almost three times as many votes as his opponents.

In the first ward to vote, Weavers on 30 October, Shore lost narrowly to his principal left-wing rival, Jill Cove. The other seven wards to place nominations all voted between 9 and 18 December; Shore won them all. Only in Spitalfields — Cove's own ward — did she come close. Some of her 19 votes at Sunday's selection meeting certainly came from that ward's delegates. (Ward votes cannot mandate delegates, as the voting at selection conferences is by secret ballot.)

Since Shore was seen by Labour left-wingers as their most senior potential scalp in the reselection process, his victory is particularly significant. Had the constituency decided by one-member-one-vote, his survival would never have been in doubt.

Peter Kellner

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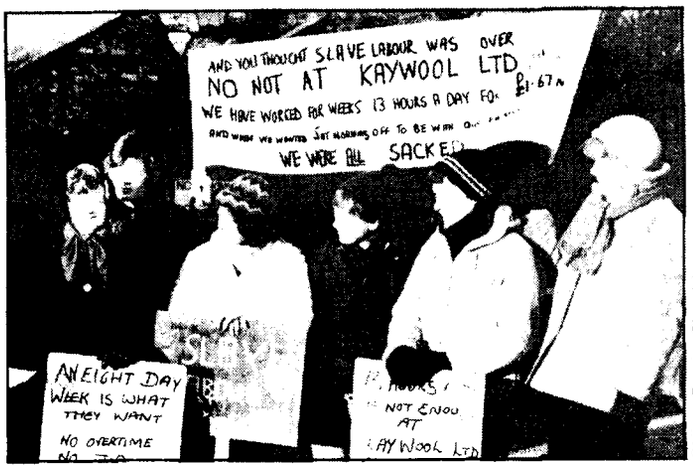

AND YOU THOUGHT SLAVE LABOUR WAS OVER
NO NOT AT KAYWOOL LTD
WE HAVE WORKED FOR WEEKS 13 HOURS A DAY FOR £1·67 p
WE WERE ALL SACKED
A EIGHT DAY WEEK IS WHAT THEY WANT
NO OVERTIME

Oldham Evening Chronicle

The women for whom 41 hours of overtime in one week is enough

SACKING OF WOMEN WHO CALLED TIME ON OVERTIME

FIVE LOW-PAID women in a Pennine furniture factory who agreed to work for 33 consecutive hours have been sacked — because they were refused to work Saturday as well. PAUL STONIER reports

THE WOMEN worked in the small Kaywool Products factory in the village of Uppermill, east of Manchester. They were paid £1.67 per hour to glue and spray foam into pieces of furniture. Technically they were employed part time, working three 13-hour days a week. In practice they had to put in a lot of overtime — to earn a living.

One evening in late November, the management persuaded the women to work on all night. Out of company loyalty they agreed, and then carried on for the whole of the next day as well — on their feet for 33 hours. Management then asked them to work the next day — Saturday — as well. Understandably wanting a break, they refused.

Back to work on Monday morning, management put further pressure on them. They walked off the job, but returned the next day, to face individual tickings off. That week they all got written warnings in their pay packets and the next week they were given letters stating that 'it is the custom pertaining in this company that reasonable overtime be worked as required,' and, calling for 'unqualified assurances of full co-operation' before commencing work the next day. On 6 December, the women agreed that they would work reasonable overtime, but not to the extent that they had recently been practiced.

Work resumed as normal until the end of that day when all five women were sacked without notice and without being notified in writing of the reasons for their dismissal. In the meantime, a supervisor who had intervened on their behalf was suspended on full pay and then sacked. Management completed their vindictiveness by dismissing the husbands of two of the women.

The women had all recently joined GMBATU, against the wishes of management. They are now taking legal advice from the union and are all covered by employment protection legislation. There is a continual picket of the factory, and there is the possibility of sympathetic industrial action by workers at the parent company in Dublin.

The company has tried to buy off the sacked workers, offering £2,000 between them to give up the picket. Some of them, however, have been offered nothing at all. ●

May and Baker

IN LAST WEEK'S ISSUE, we incorrectly stated that Friends of the Earth had claimed that groundwater beneath May and Baker's Norwich chemical factory was seriously polluted with mercury and could pollute the city's water supply.

As we reported, FoE's investigations have shown very high levels of mercury in a disused soakaway. Anglian Water has shown that there is mercury in surface water around the factory, but the levels in the *groundwater* are very low and there is no evidence of contamination of the water supply.

Anglian Water have confirmed FoE's finding that levels of mercury in eels in the River Yare are well above the EEC's environmental quality objective, but there is no evidence of high levels of mercury currently entering the river from the sewage works that process waste from May and Baker's factory. Nor is there a connection with the water supply. They have also confirmed that May and Baker are partly responsible for pollution of the groundwater with bromides and nitrates. We apologise for the errors.

MISCELLANY

Charles, Di and Tarzan

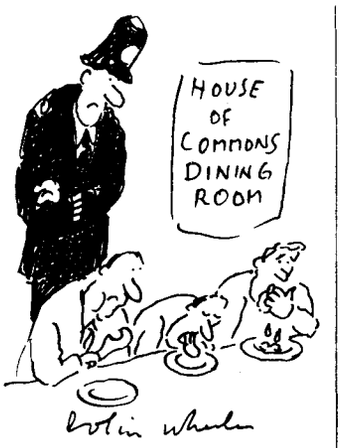
Remember how ITN offered Charles and Di full censorship facilities in their PR video with the fawning Sir Alastair Burnet — facilities which they then used (*NS* 1 November)? Despite assurances that it was a unique concession, ITN seem to have got into the habit of giving editorial control to their interviewees. When Michael Heseltine stormed off Channel Four news last week on learning that Clive Ponting was due to make a videotaped appearance on the same programme, the editors were so overawed by the great man's wrath that they scurried back to the cutting room and tried hack out Ponting's contribution to the tape. Unfortunately, they found that this left the piece with a massive libel in it which they couldn't do anything about. Ponting was picked up from the cutting room floor, stuck back in, and broadcast the next evening. As you might expect, journalists at ITN are hopping mad about the whole business. As for the Royal Interview, Sir Alastair's book recording the historic event has, according the ITV's house magazine, been a 'complete sellout'. Quite so.

The Gowrie syndrome

Now that Heseltine has laid down his ministerial burdens, he can, if he wants, resume a direct interest in the vast Haymarket publishing empire which he launched in the '60s. Having been a minister from virtually the day he was elected, he hasn't been able to touch a penny — which must have been scant compensation for the extra ministerial cash. Right from the start Heseltine made it clear that he couldn't subsist on an MP's salary. In 1966 BBC Bristol did a programme called Seven for Westminster *about some of the West Country new boys, including Heseltine. The interviewer, Anthony Barker, remembers the young Tarzan's words: 'All the salary and more will go on the costs of the job. I must buy a house in my Devon constituency . . . and that will mean engaging a Spanish couple to be a cook and housekeeper. And then there's the travelling. Members get a first class ticket of course, but the wife, children and nanny must come too. One can hardly travel in first and put them in steerage'. Mercifully, Heseltine now sits for Henley, no doubt because of the shocking increases since 1966 in BR's first class fares (and even, people say, steerage).*

Sharp practices

Labour MP Chris Smith is going to pursue 'vigorously' the question of whether House of Commons police are compiling notes on members' visitors. Last Thursday (16 January) a guest of his at the House was publicly rebuked by a heavy cop at the security point for being — which he isn't — in the habit of arriving at the Commons with objects that might be construed as 'offensive'. Smith's hapless guest had properly declared and checked in two kitchen knives wrapped in newspaper within his haversack. He received his 'verballing' on the way out, when



security had returned the knives. The egregious plod even told him he'd be liable to be run in if a police officer in the street found him to have the knives in his bag. 'How does any citizen buy a knife in a shop and get it home?' onlookers wondered. Smith has written to the Serjeant-at-Arms for full explanation of how a Commons policeman happened to have and use such erroneous 'background knowledge' of an MP's guest.

Marital bliss

No doubt about it, the hero of the week's newspapers has been Mr Arthur Marshall, British ambassador to South Yemen, who stood under shellfire on the beaches of Aden, shepherding trembling Brits to safety. It could have all been quite different, Miscellany can reveal. Mr Marshall was only appointed ambassador three months ago after years of worthy but obscure service, mainly in the Middle East. He'd actually been on the point of taking early retirement when the job offer came up. Not only that, but he almost certainly wouldn't have been able to assume the ambassadorship at all if he hadn't just got married (for the second time — his first wife died many years ago). Gulf countries generally look askance at unmarried ambassadors, because so much of the protocal demands the presence of a woman. But for his nuptials, Mr Marshall could be peacefully indulging his hobbies of music and nature back home. It must be giving him cause for thought.

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SCRUTINY

WORDS BUT NO ACTION OVER 2,000 DEATHS

Camera Press

Barney Hayhoe: a dull, male minister

Despite publicity about the death last March of Phillipa Kingston who'd had a cervical smear which showed evidence of early malignant change, Health Minister Barney Hayhoe (and his predecessor Kenneth Clarke) has avoided responsibility for proper cervical cancer screening. JAMES LE FANU reports on official inaction over 2,000 preventable deaths a year

THE PRIORITIES are obvious to anyone connected with screening, and have been for years (*NS* 16 March 1984). To be effective, screening programmes have to be universal. Otherwise, in the words of Dr Gillian Gau of London's Queen Charlotte's hospital, 'the middle class will get the smears, and the working class will get the cancer'. Priority No 1, then, is a system whereby women are called for a cervical smear from a central registry and recalled at five-yearly intervals.

Secondly, as smears are done by many different doctors and processed through different laboratories, there is a risk of error. Phillipa Kingston's positive smear report had been filed, only to be rediscovered when she came back to her doctor with the distressing symptoms of advanced cancer. Priority No 2 is that someone should be in charge of the screening programme and answerable for its effectiveness.

Thirdly, the system has to be responsive to changing patterns of disease. The number of deaths from cervical cancer in young women has doubled over the last decade, and the type of cancer they are dying from has changed to become more aggressive. Priority No 3 is that young women should have tests at three-yearly intervals, and ideally *every year*.

After Ms Kingston's death, at the age of 32, shadow health minister Frank Dobson challenged Kenneth Clarke to admit government responsibility for the 'shambles whereby only seven [out of 183] health districts in the country have a decent system'. Clarke pointed out that health authorities had been instructed in 1981 to set up local recall systems. He said they would now be advised to set up a 'call and recall' system (to invite new women to have a smear and recall them as well). But it was not, he said, the responsibility of central government. And that was that. There were to be no extra funds to set up schemes or to process the increased number of smears. There was no 'advice' to increase the frequency of smears among younger women.

Last month Clarke's successor Hayhoe admitted that only 37 district health authorities had computerised call and recall systems — *or firm plans to implement them* by the end of the year. Of these *only 17* call women over 20 years old.

At the same time Dr Helen Duguid published the results of a screening programme undertaken at Ninewells hospital in Dundee since 1962. Smears were taken when the opportunity arose, rather than on the basis of a 'call' scheme, but there was a recall system. Death rates from cervical cancer among women under 34 had changed little, compared to a rising national trend. Death rates of women over 55 had also not changed (and were the highest). The opportunities for screening this age group are necessarily fewer. But in the 35 to 54 age group mortality rates declined by about 50 per cent. 'The logical conclusion, that this is due to screening, is inescapable,' comments Dr Duguid. ●

Monopoly is good for you

A MONOPOLIES Commission report on tampons, published last week but not reported in the media, found that Tampax and Lil-lets have a monopoly (technically a duopoly) and that their prices were higher than they would otherwise be. But the Commission found that this *wasn't* against the public interest.

The report argues: 'We judge it more beneficial in this case that currently rewarding profit levels ['fairly lavish' according to one commissioner] should act as a magnet to attract new suppliers to the market.'

This argument hasn't been used by the Commission before, and derives from the Chicago University school of economics, which holds that free market forces will 'self-correct' any monopoly. The Chicago school was represented on the tampons inquiry by Professor Stephen Littlechild, author of *The Fallacy of the Mixed Economy* (1978).

In the five years since the Commission's last report on tampons, which concluded that the higher prices *were* against the public interest, the price of Tampax has gone up by 20 per cent more than inflation and Lil-lets by 18 per cent more.

The Commission found that the most common price for both brands is the same: £1.49 for Regular 40s. (The only ray of hope is the few own brands on the market — Sainsbury's, Boots and Superdrug — a few pence cheaper. A male spokesperson for Sainsbury's appeared not to know what a tampon was, but a second, female, spokesperson said the company never reveals the identity of its own brand suppliers.)

However, the Commission found 'no evidence of any restrictive or anti-competitive practices' on the part of Tampax and Southalls, the Smith and Nephew subsidiary which makes Lil-lets. Nor did it think there were any 'insuperable barriers' to other suppliers entering the market, although it admitted it would be 'difficult'.

The Commission ruled, therefore, that it is in women's own interest to be charged 30p more for a box of 40 than if tampons had kept pace with inflation, so that the huge profits earned by Tampax and Southalls will tempt other suppliers to overcome the difficulties and compete with them, ultimately bringing the price down. There was one woman on the tampons inquiry group.

The suggestion that Tampax and Southalls might also be getting away with high prices because of the 'embarrassment factor' — possible (male) competitors won't *want* to produce and advertise tampons — did not occur to the Commission, despite its finding three years ago that LRC (formerly the London Rubber Company) operated a monopoly against the public interest in the supply of Durex contraceptive sheaths.

John Rentoul

The missing rule-book

A SNEAK preview of the confidential Cabinet 'Questions of Procedure for Ministers' that Tony Benn MP is threatening to publish is available in the form of the 1952 version at the Public Record Office.

The message ('free and frank discussion between ministers is hampered if the processes by which it is carried on are laid bare') and much of the wording haven't changed.

Apart from prohibiting 'disclosures in the Press', it sheds interesting light on Michael Heseltine's allegation that Mrs Thatcher manipulated Cabinet procedure to get her way over Westland. It says Cabinet should deal with 'questions on which there is an unresolved conflict of interest between Departments', but only after 'all other means of resolving it have been exhausted, including personal correspondence'.

But Heseltine's complaint about the Cabinet minutes is not supported. Paragraph 14 reads: 'The Secretary is under instructions to avoid, so far as practicable, recording the opinions expressed by particular Ministers.'

Patrick Forbes

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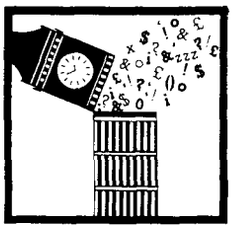

Thatcher braces herself for three months of disasters

IN THIS COLUMN's pre-Christmas reverie, I speculated on the possibility of an early general election. Ulster would become ungovernable: Mrs Thatcher would want a fresh mandate to take on the Protestants: a tax-cutting budget would make the Tories more popular on the mainland: she would seize her chance while the polls looked good.

Such was the plausibility of this scenario that, I am reliably informed, politicians choked on their muesli as they read the column, rival journalists wondered in awe at its sagacity, and television executives had nightmares: they had counted on a quiet 1986 before plunging into their pre-election planning.

Ulster remains the wild card. If, following this week's by-elections, Ian Paisley's more militant followers stage an effective tax and rates revolt — or do other things to demonstrate that they love the union but hate Westminster — then a crisis election remains a possibility.

But no longer is there any prospect that Mrs Thatcher would wish an early election to cash in on a post-budget consumer boom. The reason is that there is not going to be a boom. All the signs now are that the government has written off the first three months of 1986 as a chapter of disasters, starting with Michael Heseltine's self-destruction and Leon Brittan's humiliation, and proceeding by way of the fall in oil prices, the rise in interest rates, the Ulster and Fulham by-elections and Tory revolts over rates towards a budget in which tax cuts will be minimal.

(The timing of the Fulham by-election will provide the clearest test of this thesis. If the Conservatives thought they could hold the seat, they would postpone the by-election until after Easter and hope to benefit from a popular budget. Initial indications are that they assume Fulham cannot be held and that the sooner they put the defeat behind them, the better.)

If the government is lucky, everything will be back to normal by the autumn. Ministerial resignations will be forgotten, Ulster will be quiet, oil prices will have recovered, interest rates will be down and Nigel Lawson will be licking his ample chops in anticipation of tax cuts in March next year. I doubt, however, that such days of easy optimism will return for the government.

The Heseltine/Brittan saga will hover like a persistent ghost while Mrs Thatcher remains Prime Minister. From now on every controversial government decision will provoke a battery of post-Heseltine questions. How was the decision reached? Was there any kind of rational discussion by the Cabinet? Or, indeed, by anyone? Did ministers say one thing in public and do something else in private? How many meetings with ministers led to 'misunderstandings'?

It is possible, as Hugo Young argued in this Tuesday's *Guardian*, that ministers will now display more courage in standing up to the Prime Minister and insist that their views are properly considered before the government makes up its mind. If this happens, a semblance of true collective decision-making may return to the Cabinet.

Yet even if this turns out objectively to be true, *perceptions* of the government's style are unlikely to improve. Partly this is a matter of timing. Decisions made in the bad old pre-Westland days will reverberate for the rest of this Parliament. Take rating reform. Quite possibly, if last autumn's Cabinet discussions were rerun now, Kenneth Baker,

PETER KELLNER

the Environment Secretary, would tell Thatcher that it is a minefield best left alone; John Wakeham would be listened to as he warned of the fury of Tory backbenchers; and Viscount Whitelaw and John Biffen would advise caution. Thatcher would heed their words and back off.

As it is, rate reform is proceeding slowly but unstoppably along its tram-lines, displaying for all to see the consequences of irrational and arbitrary policy-formation.

Even new, improved policies will do little to repair the government's reputation for ineptitude. The image of the way Thatcher's Cabinet works will remain the image created by Heseltine. The leaks, the rows, the allegations: no matter that many details are disputed and may never be resolved, the sudden illumination of the darker workings of the Cabinet cannot easily be erased or supplanted.

WHAT IS WORSE for Thatcher is that as the next general election draws closer, more and more MPs will face the choice of sustaining government policy or sustaining their own political careers — and decide that their careers (or 'my constituents', as they would put it) come first.

That, above all, is the significance of this week's revolt on Baker's decision to switch £400 million of rate support grant from the shire counties to the inner cities. It highlights the Tories' strategic problem of defending their majority at the next election: the party's need to fight on two quite separate fronts. The Conservatives have to defend urban marginals against the Alliance. Whereas each opposition group can tailor its appeal to voters in the seats it hopes to win, the Tories have to balance the interests of two quite distinct groups of vulnerable MPs.

This is how the arithmetic of the Tories' dilemma works out. Suppose nationwide polls show some recovery of government support and the next election produces a seven point Tory lead, with the Conservatives on 38 per cent, Labour winning 31 and the Alliance 29. Compared with 1983, this would represent a six point decline for the Tories, with Labour and the Alliance gaining three points each.

This outcome — and I know few Tories who privately expect anything better than that — would translate into the following pattern of seats on the conventional assumption of uniform national swing: Conservative 328, Labour 259, Alliance 39, others 24. The Tories would have a narrow overall majority, but a 30-seat advantage over the combined votes of Labour and the Alliance. Mrs Thatcher could carry on governing.

But suppose the nationwide polls mask a significant variation in different kinds of seat. The Tories lose six points everywhere, but all their lost votes go to Labour in Tory-Labour marginals and to the Alliance in Tory-Alliance marginals. In other words, suppose that the net effect of all the shifts in votes is to help whichever non-Tory candidate has the best chance of winning.

In that case, the Tories would lose an extra 25 seats - 12 to Labour and 13 to the Alliance. The Tories would still be the largest party in the Commons, with 303 seats, while Labour would have 271 and the Alliance 52. But, as the total of Labour and Alliance MPs would now comfortably exceed the Tories, Mrs Thatcher would have great difficulty continuing as Prime Minister.

Tactical voting has never before taken place on this scale (although it did happen to a modest extent in February 1974). But never before has the choice been clearer: it is not simply that the Alliance came second to the Conservatives in 263 seats, but that they are now the obvious challengers in around 100 seats where, on any reasonable assessment, they can win and Labour cannot.

Closing Monday night's debate, William Waldegrave, Minister for Local Government, said that the Tory rebels were being inconsistent: most of them had voted for the government's overall economic policy at the time of the Autumn Statement, but were unwilling now to accept one of the logical consequences of voting for tight control of public spending. Waldegrave was right. But so was James Prior when he interrupted to say that the minister was inviting the rebels to vote against the government more often.

You never know: perhaps they will. □

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MUMMY AND DADDY TRY TO GET A WORD IN EDGEWISE

John Sturrock/Network

How much will you bid for these public assets? Parents' rally last week to try to force the government to spend more; they could turn on the NUT next

Any idea that 'parent power' is going to create a Fourth Estate in the teachers' dispute is a non-starter, says BARRY HUGILL. Parents want the row over, but that's the limit of their unity

'AT THE END of the dispute will parents form a new "fourth estate" in education along with central government, the education authorities and the teachers? If this happens, what will be the likely effects on the system?'

The man asking the question last week at a parents' meeting in Dundee was Fred Forrester, organising secretary of the north of the border teachers' union, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS). Like their English and Welsh colleagues the Scottish teachers have of course been in long dispute with local authorities, their employers, over pay. For teachers throughout the country, no less than for government, parental support is seen as vital in the to-and-fro battle for public opinion. National newspapers have been making much of parental concern in the last few days, with headlines and editorials hailing 'parent power'.

Forrester believes that said 'parental power' will bring an end to the government's cheeseparing policies and force it to reconsider its attitude to public spending. But the EIS, in common with all the teacher unions, has a vested interest in encouraging parental anger against the government.

His use of the term 'fourth estate' is an interesting one with its distant echoes of revolutionary France. Only 18 months ago the French education minister was forced to resign after a massive 1789-style march of protesting parents on Versailles. Unfortunately this week's (23 January) lobby of Westminster by parents demanding more government cash for the teachers, although impressive, hasn't the same historical bezazz and won't hasten the departure of Sir Keith as Education Secretary; nor weaken his and Mrs Thatcher's resolve to see the teachers off.

Which isn't to say that parents are an irrelevance. There can be no doubting the delight at Elizabeth House, the Department of Education's London HQ, at last week's about-turn by the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations (NCPTA). Previously solidly behind the teachers, the NCPTA is now demanding that the teachers' unions settle on the best terms available and end — immediately — classroom disruption. Sir Keith's aides had been dourly logging utterances from parental spokespersons to counter what they presumed would be pro-teacher bias, but now it's more gleefully, to gather ammunition for their political masters. Joseph and his junior minister, Chris Patten, are going to be mentioning the NCPTA a *great* deal in their forthcoming speeches.

How good an indicator of parental opinion is the NCPTA? Its claims to represent 4 million parents can be taken with a pinch of salt, but with over 5,000 affiliated groups it's probably a fairly accurate barometer of public mood. Jack Jones, the general secretary, and a National Union of Teachers (NUT) member, gives 27 reasons for the change in policy. They all boil down to a conviction that pupils are the victims of the 11 month guerilla action and that however just the teachers' case 'children must come first'.

Jones says his executive has been flooded with parents' accounts of the damage being

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caused to their children and that it would have been impossible to continue with support for the teachers. He doesn't say, but is obviously aware, that one of the NCPTA's leading members, deputy general secretary James Hammond, has recently revealed that he's contemplating sending his 14 year old son to a private school. Many other NCPTA members have apparently also indicated they're going private.

Indeed, in some areas, notably London, applications to independent day schools are up by as much as a fifth well before the normal closing date for their entrance exams. As far as headteachers of the independent schools are concerned the continuing disruption in the state sector is the major reason.

SO IN A LIMITED and negative sense the parental 'right to choose' could prove an important factor in determining the outcome of the dispute. Whilst Sir Keith personally is unlikely to gain satisfaction from parental desertion of the state sector the less sensitive elements in the Tory Party will be cock-a-hoop. And loss of the important psychological support of NCPTA is a serious blow for the teachers' unions.

On Saturday (18 January) the NUT voted to intensify the action with an all-out one-day strike, but probably of greater importance the second largest union, The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, determined that it will press on with the other smaller teachers' unions to try and reach a settlement through arbitration via ACAS. Isolation of the NUT is in part a reflection of growing feeling amongst the other unions that public support may be waning, and that a settlement must be reached quickly before the examination season arrives. If the dispute does go on and exams were hit, as they inevitably would be, it would be a brave teacher who believed that there would not be a massive parental backlash against the unions.

In fairness to the NUT it must be reported that last week did see the first meeting of the All London Parents' Action Group. Over 700 people packed the Conway Hall and passed a resolution condemning the NCPTA. And another London-based parents' group, the ILEA Parents' Central Consultative Committee, launched a campaign to force the government to come up with more cash for teachers. Both groups are broadly sympathetic to the NUT's stand, and the last thing they want is for their concern for their childrens' education to be interpreted as criticism of the teachers' conduct of the dispute.

The NCPTA about-turn, this week's lobby of Parliament by parents, all demonstrate what was already known: the overwhelming majority of parents are passionately concerned about their offsprings' well-being. But the wide spectrum of parental interventions does not point to a cohesive, collective parental viewpoint on matters educational. It tells us only that most parents would rather not have their children sent home because a teacher is sick and no-one will cover for her.

There isn't a homogeneous entity called 'parents'. Most want an end to the dispute but there the unity ends. About the conduct of schooling, the nature of examinations, the organisation of the curriculum there are almost as many views as there are parents. It may be that the dispute has made many more people aware of the chronic underinvestment in state schools, and that the upsurge in parental feeling may force the government to rethink its public spending policies — but recently published expenditure plans show no evidence of this. To the contrary.

In recent years there have been impressive examples of parents organising locally around specific educational issues, often school closures, to force a change of policy on a local authority. In the London borough of Redbridge, for example, and in several shire counties, such actions blocked Tory plans to re-introduce or expand grammar schools. In Liverpool they forced the Labour council to re-think a plan to close all single-sex schools. And in Bradford parents got rid of Ray Honeyford.

But local campaigns, however impressive, do not point to a 'fourth estate'. □

GET ME TO RUNNYMEDE

LECTURERS IN ARMS

Gerard Livett

Camden's Lord Mayor joins the campaign to protect a disappearing species: the university lecturer

The first university strike has been traced back to Oxford in 1209. JOHN McILROY on what 'King John' Joseph has done to outrage today's lecturers

SIR KEITH JOSEPH was convinced it could never happen. But last week's lecturers' strike, part of the first real campaign of industrial action in the 70-year history of the Association of University Teachers (AUT), shows that he continues to underestimate the damage his policies are inflicting on higher education, and the bitterness they have generated.

The igniting spark was salaries. The AUT put a claim to the Universities Authorities Panel (UAP) more than a year ago. Its first main element was a Committee of Inquiry with a brief to correct post-1979 salary erosion by April 1986; and an interim increase, above the rate of inflation, to be paid from April 1985. The UAP are in reality surrogate employers, whilst Treasury cash limits mean that even the paymasters at one remove, the Department of Education and Science (DES), have constricted scope for manoeuvre.

After three fruitless meetings of the negotiating committee there was deadlock. The employers agreed to submit a joint report on salary erosion to the DES, but only if the AUT accepted a 4 per cent increase for 1985 — 1 per cent above the salary element in the universities' recurrent grant but well below the rate of inflation, 6 per cent, and the increase

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in average earnings, 7.5 per cent.

The lecturers' sense of injustice was further exacerbated by the fact that despite attempts by the DES and the minister to fiddle the figures by switching baselines, the AUT has convincingly argued that university salaries have fallen 22 per cent in real terms since Mrs Thatcher's policies began to bite. Anger was further fanned when vice-chancellors blandly informed Sir Keith that for their part they accepted that nothing further than 4 per cent for 1985 could be done in the present wage round, even as university technicians were being offered more than 5 per cent; and as polytechnic teachers agreed an increase of 5 per cent from April 1985, with an additional 2 per cent from last December.

This last settlement would have ensured that if the 4 per cent on offer to lecturers *were* accepted, every point on the university lecturer scale — with the exception of the top point — would be below the equivalent on the polytechnic lecturer scale.

It was problems with wage scales which prompted the second element in the AUT's 1985 claim. Until the late '70s more than three-quarters of university academics were promoted to senior lecturer during their careers, often before they reached the top of the ordinary lecturer's scale. Today, largely because of a limitation set by the University Grants Committee (UGC) — the body that acts as a buffer between academics and government and channels funds to the universities — not more than 40 per cent of staff in any particular institution can be in promoted posts. More than 40 per cent of university teachers are at the top of the ordinary lecturers' scale compared with 20 per cent a decade ago. Many will remain there for the forseeable future despite having senior lecturer qualifications.

To solve this promotion blockage the AUT proposed a single combined scale with relatively automatic progression. The authorities refused to establish a working party to look at it. Instead, the vice-chancellors produced their own proposals to replace the present two grades with four, thus creating the possibility of three blockages instead of one. Their counter proposals, described by UGC chair Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer as heralding the end of common pay scales and the beginning of market-related salaries, also included a five year probation period instead of the present three years; and plans for closer assessment of lecturers, resonant of the controversial report from Sir Alex Jarratt, chair of Reed International, urging tighter measurement of performance.

As the Autumn term began and the universities — to protect themselves from higher national insurance contributions but with an air of finality — put the 4 per cent into pay packets, the AUT, looking particularly at the school teachers, decided that there was only one shot left in the locker. An emergency council meeting on 8 November authorised balloting on a series of one day strikes.

But the wages position in itself is far from the whole story, nor would it have been sufficient to have brought most university teachers out on the picket lines.

What *did* was concern for the future viability of Britain's university system. Funding has been cut by more than 10 per cent in real terms since 1980-81, involving the loss of £460 million and one in seven academic jobs. Staff-student ratios have declined by 6 per cent in the arts and humanities and by more than 11 per cent in the government's cherished science subjects. Universities are postponing essential building work, cutting back on essentials such as libraries and eating into reserves.

Despite the Prime Minister's assurance during the 1983 election of a period of level funding, last May's Green Paper merely promised further cut-backs, a shift of resources into science and technology and the possible closure of departments and entire universities. In its wake, the UGC asked universities to plan for a recurrent cut of up to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent each year until the end of the decade, this to be implemented from an already shrunken base.

Cudgelled though they are by Sir Keith's rhetoric against 'jobs for life', more than three-quarters of the 11,000 university researchers have less than a year of their short term contracts to run. In December, Sir Keith announced plans to abolish 'tenure', (the system by which to protect academic freedom and the propagation of unpopular views lecturers can only be sacked for gross misconduct), for all new and all promoted staff. The students are perhaps the most important casualties of this continually deteriorating environment. Their grant, for example, is to rise this year by all of 2 per cent. Currently £2,165 in London, £1,830 elsewhere, £1,480 for those who live at home, its value has declined 17 per cent in real terms since 1979.

And what purposes is this government-induced crisis intended to serve? As Mrs Thatcher prepares to receive from the private University of Buckingham the degree Oxford denied her, Sir Keith claims that universities have to bear their share of retrenchment, raise their standards and serve the economy more effectively. They can enter the industrial marketplace for replacement funds. Demand anyway is falling along with the eighteen year old birthrates.

But student demand isn't fixed by birth rates but mouldable and dependent on a range of factors from admission policy to the impact of policies in other fields such as housing and health. DES projections ignore increased participation rates by women. They assume that nothing will be done to encourage wider social access to universities by working class students, mature entrants and ethnic minorities. They even make the dubious assumption that working class families moving into social class 1 and 2 won't change their 'educational preferences'. Today's reality can already be seen: since 1978 the numbers applying to universities have risen by over 10 per cent, while the number accepted has fallen by nearly 4 per cent.

There *is* a case for making universities more socially relevant and socially accountable. Labour's draft *Charter on Higher and Continuing Education* is a good first stab at it. What Conservative strategies will produce if unopposed is something very different — a drastically slimmed down academy serving the needs of industrial powerholders and bearing the faintest resemblance to anything previously thought of as a university. □

COMBATTING CRIME

LOONY-TUNE LAW & ORDER

Let's give up on solving crime, say the Tory theorists, and just police the youth. RICHARD KINSEY on their new guru

IT'S BECOMING fashionable at No 10 to argue that there's little the police can do about crime. Patrols are very unlikely to catch criminals in the act and in most burglaries the loss is too trivial, except perhaps to the bereft owner, to warrant the expense of clearing them up.

The answer, we are told, is to 'design out crime'. In the shorter term, the public is urged to buy DIY window locks, plastic keys for electricity meters and the like. In the longer term, we are looking at housing estates designed to keep the criminals out. The second arm of the new Tory strategy is to play down the *extent* of crime. Thus we are told people are unduly anxious about crime: the risks of victimisation are actually a lot less than is widely believed. And as a result, people make unnecessary demands upon and have false expectations of the police. 'In reality' the primary function of the police shouldn't be fighting crime at all but maintaining order on the streets.

The new Tory luminary is James Q Wilson, professor of government at Harvard University and advisor on law and order to President Reagan. His argument is summarised in the recent *British Crime Survey* (Home Office, 1985, p39): 'Fear of crime is triggered by non-criminal disorder on the streets — drunks, youths causing disturbances, noisy householders, graffiti, rubbish and litter . . . [These] incivilities serve as signs of crime and thus lead to fear regardless of actual levels of crime. [This] can provoke a downward spiral of fear of crime, neighbourhood decline and increased crime itself.'

In his very influential book *Thinking About Crime* (2nd ed. 1983), Wilson strongly supports the use of stop and search and wide police discretion, not as means of crime detection or law enforcement but as the way in which police can 'maintain order' on the streets and enforce what he, and others, term 'middle class values'. This is the kind of theorising behind the new offence of 'disorderly conduct' contained in the new Public Order Bill.

Perhaps such ideas have merit in America. Not in Britain. Our research in Merseyside and Islington shows beyond any doubt that in inner city and working class areas the anxiety caused by crime is neither irrational nor unrealistic. In the inner city, the chances of being burgled (eg) are over five times the national average — one in four houses being burgled every year in Liverpool 8 and one in six in Islington. ▷

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The nurse on the left established British nursing standards. The nurse on the right is being forced to compromise them.

Over a century ago, Florence Nightingale brought to nursing a degree of professionalism, commitment and care that has been its hallmark ever since.

As a result, thousands of little children grew up wanting to be nurses. Today, many of the children who did become nurses are wishing they hadn't.

Because since the Griffiths Report, nurses are increasingly being treated like children.

The Griffiths Report recommended major changes in the way that the National Health Service is run. Chief among them is the idea that it can be made more cost-effective by employing managers from the business world.

WHO PAYS?

We would argue that in many places, cost-cutting is being carried out at the patients' expense. Because, whilst we agree that administrators can run hospitals, we don't believe that they can run nursing.

More and more Health Authorities are appointing executives: at the same time, they are depriving nurses of any meaningful management role.

The results could be frightening.

Imagine a hospital where the nurses have no say at all in the choice of beds or other equipment. Where nursing staff can advise on patient care, but can't take any decisions. Where a matter of life and death can become a matter of pounds and pence. A hospital where the patients' spokesman has lost her voice.

Now stop imagining.

Because this is what's starting to happen in Health Authorities throughout the country.

As the protector of nursing standards, the Royal College of Nursing is appalled.

THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY.

We want to see a director of nursing appointed in every health unit in Britain.

Someone with the power and the nursing experience to make health care more effective.

Whilst the administrator concentrates on making it more cost-efficient.

We think that Miss Nightingale would agree with us. If you do too, please add your name to our petition by sending us the coupon.

And, if you're as worried as we are, please write to your Member of Parliament now (the address is the House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA).

I agree. Nursing should be run by nurses. NSTB

Name

Address

ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING

Please send to the Royal College of Nursing Petition, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1M 0AB.

WE CARE FOR NURSES, SO THEY CAN CARE FOR YOU.

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In both the Merseyside and Islington surveys, we have charted *public* priorities for the police. The results are almost identical. The offences which the public want to see prioritised are sexual assaults against women, burglary, robbery with violence, heroin offences and drunk driving. These findings are constant across age, gender, race and class — giving the lie to Norman Tebbit's claim to a generalised 'permissiveness' amongst the young. Right down at the bottom of the list are offences such as prostitution, shop-lifting and, critically, rowdiness in the streets.

Police saw it differently. In our Merseyside survey we found that in comparison with 8 per cent of the public, 40 per cent of supervisory officers in Merseyside put rowdiness in the street among their five highest priorities. While 73 per cent of the public included sexual assaults in their top five crimes, only 25 per cent of officers did so.

WHILE 'ROWDINESS on the street' isn't seen by the public to be a high priority, the sexual harassment of women is. Throughout Merseyside, more than a quarter of women under 30 reported that they had been 'very upset' by such incidents during the past year. 57 per cent of women in Merseyside said they worry about going out on their own after dark and 39 per cent believe it is 'fairly likely' that something will happen to them if they do. In contrast, only 5 per cent of senior police officers thought the risk 'fairly likely', while 34 per cent said that there were no risks at all. In Islington 72 per cent of Black women under 25 reported sexual harassment at least once during the last year.

Extraordinary differences between police and public priorities in the cities give real substance to Labour's demands for greater accountability and effective external review of policing policy. Plainly, as far as the public are concerned, the primary function of the police shouldn't be 'order maintenance' but to enforce the criminal law and investigate crime.

The police are visibly failing in the task. Our research in Merseyside and the Policy Studies Institute's study of the Met in London have revealed highly bureaucratised, inefficient organisation. At any one time out of a force of 4,600 officers in Merseyside there will be only 126 officers out on the streets.

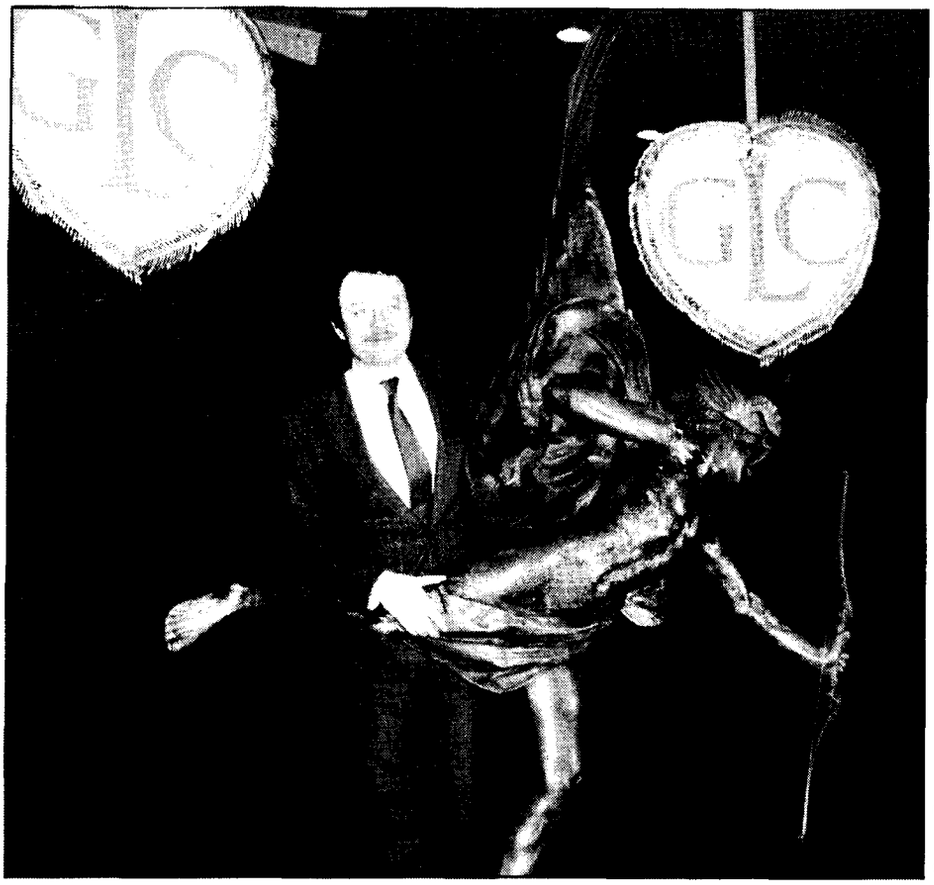
Our research suggests that a policy giving uniform officers greater responsibility for routine crime investigation would meet public priorities and come to be favoured by police themselves. The Tories and their latest guru James Q Wilson meanwhile go on trying to foist on both police and public their obsession with public order and the social control of youth. □

Additional research by John Lea and Jock Young. The reports on the Merseyside and Islington Crime Surveys are available from the Police Committee Support Section, Merseyside County Council, Metropolitan House, Old Hall Street, Liverpool L69 3EL.

Correction

In last week's Weekend article, 'Stripping illusions', Steve Roberts was wrongly described as a strip club manager. This was due to an error in transmission. He is in fact a stage manager for a strip club show.

FRAGMENTATION BOMB



Camera Press

Eros is supposed to be back on his Piccadilly site this spring — just when it will be Ken's turn to go off for refurbishment, in Brent East

The *force majeure* co-operation of the GLC in its present undoing means, says CHRISTIAN WOLMAR, that there won't be the predicted instant chaos — but the messy new London 'structures' are never going to outlive Thatcher

'The GLC will be seen as a landmark, like the administration of Vienna between the wars. We were the first to learn the lessons about the postwar welfare state and to reject its authoritarianism. The GLC has laid the foundations of a more participatory and democratic socialism which will be the bedrock for new Labour policies. We attracted support from the same sort of young people who went for Gary Hart in the States and Labour needs them to get anywhere.'

— Ken Livingstone

THE OPPONENTS of the abolition of the Greater London Council have so far been proved both right and wrong by the early stages of its dismantling.

As they predicted, cuts are being made by default as services slip through the gaps between diverse successor bodies, with no-one having to be cast in the role of executioner. The new 'structure' for London's government hardly warrants that description — it is an untidy mess that will survive only as long as the current government, whatever the hue of its successor. And, of course, as was known when the Bill was published, the notion of devolving services through the abolition of the GLC was but a figment of the imagination of the Tory manifesto's author.

Those who fought abolition were wrong, however, in two respects.

The chaos promised in much of the early rhetoric will not materialise, largely because of the GLC's decision, inspired by GLC leader Ken Livingstone himself, to co-operate with, rather than obstruct, the abolition process. There will be no fortress GLC, no barricades. There is, on the other hand, terrible uncertainty amongst thousands of workers who, with two and a half months to go, don't yet know whether their fate is the dole queue or a job, possibly temporary, with a successor body. And whilst London's traffic lights may not go out on April Fools Day, there will be a lot of initial confusion amongst those currently relying on GLC services.

Again, the GLC will go out with a whimper

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rather than a bang, despire the huge fireworks display planned to mark its demise. Already the issue has tumbled down the political agenda, lost in ratecapping round 2, and a sea of successor bodies too complex for any but the deeply partisan to get to grips with. The recent increased interest in local government, heightened by ratecapping and abolition, cannot be sustained throughout the nitty-gritty of the GLC's carve-up, although it is comparable to the break-up of a multinational — spending of £900 million, excluding investment last year, billions of pounds of assets on whose value no-one is able to provide a serious estimate and a staff of 21,000. Londoners await a new government.

A distinction needs to be made between the two separate processes involved in abolition. The *first* is a transfer of services which in a few cases, such as parts of the planning and recreational functions, may be quite sensible; and the *second*, transfers like waste disposal and research which are ludicrous. When Mrs Thatcher had the abolition of the GLC hastily inserted into the Tory manifesto weeks before the 1983 general election, she couldn't have known about the three zoos it runs, or the special team it employs to maintain London's bridges, or the 19 staff working to keep London green at the Avery Hill tree nursery. There was no provision for the fate of these services in the Local Government Act 1985, probably because its drafters were unaware of them. (Even Ken Livingstone confessed to the *New Statesman* that he was still discovering parts of the GLC he had never reached before.)

Yet the DoE is standing back from the abolition process. It no longer trumpets claims about savings — originally ministers were boasting of £50 million a year, but they quickly dropped that because no feasible estimate of the savings or losses will ever be possible — and is allowing the cuts to be made by an extraordinary process of decision-making vacuum. Services which may need a central organisation come before the London Co-ordinating Committee of Successor Councils (LCC) (*see box*) whose meetings exhibit the worst aspects of parish pump politics and delegated decision-making. Its chair, Peter Bowness, leader of Croydon, claims that it has no power but if its members were willing it could take on staff and services. It meets once a month in the afternoon for merely two and a half hours and its agenda is never completed.

The LCC's members don't even want to pay for the most worthy causes. It refused to take on the GLC's Disability Resource Team, a pioneering unit with just 28 staff. Even Taxicard, the scheme by which people with disabilities can use taxis at a reduced rate, took four meetings and the dissent of Barnet, Bromley, Hillingdon and Sutton to get through with a budget of £5.5m.

The LCC tried to hive off the reputable GLC scientific branch to the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority at its last meeting but the latter, ratecapped like all the new boards, is unwilling to take it on unless there's a guarantee of funds from the boroughs. Although decisions in the LCC are made by a simple majority, they are not binding on dissenting councils, which means it moves at the pace of its least co-operative member.

IN TERMS OF JOBS, the future of several big GLC departments has been settled: the fire brigade with 8,000 staff is going to the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority, the GLC supplies department with 700 to the new Inner London Education Authority (which is taking on another 3,000 GLC workers) and the 550 waste disposal staff will be spread between the seven boards. Frances Morrell, ILEA's leader, says she is confident that there will be no redundancies amongst the GLC's 4,000 manual white-collar workers — 3,000 is the median guesstimate.

To that must be added casualties in voluntary organisations. Three separate arrangements have been created, though one is so small it can be ignored. For all-London groups, the LCC agreed to set up a London Boroughs Grants Committee which, because it has statutory force, has to have a two thirds majority for any decision. Consequently, it has been deadlocked over the budget since its creation two months ago, with Tories wanting only £24 million and Labour, backed by the committee's sole bureaucrat, not prepared to go lower than £28.6 million for the first year. After an emergency meeting two weeks ago, a compromise of £27 million now awaits ratification by the boroughs but meanwhile, according to Martyn Hall of the London Voluntary Service Council, 'redundancy notices are already being sent out by many groups as they won't know about their funding until the end of February at best'. Only when a budget is agreed on can the 1,100 applications be sorted, let alone decisions be made.

In a separate scheme, the government has allocated £20 million (for the GLC and the met counties) for transitional funding of more local groups. Just how rough removal of the GLC can be is seen in the example of Tory-controlled Westminster, where the council provided just 10 per cent of the GLC's funding but has refused to apply for transitional funding: 17 groups now face closure or job losses. Throughout London, 'respectable' charities are being as badly affected as the more politically contentious groups.

The extent to which a GLC in exile should be set up has been a source of argument between the Labour boroughs and the GLC Labour Group. The decision of the Association of London Authorities (which broadly represents London's Labour boroughs) to establish a unit which will take on part of the GLC's work on women, industry and employment, ethnic minorities, planning, transport, policing, disability and the arts, biding its time until the resurrection with a provisional budget of £8.4 million, is a big victory for Livingstone's vision of an embryo authority ready, at the drop of an election, to go into action: 'Within weeks of the general election, whether it's a hung parliament or a Labour government, we could have the GLC back on the road. The Alliance, here, agrees with us.'

Another deal between Labour boroughs means that part of the GLC's central housing technical unit, which provides the back-up service for the housing programme (the largest in Britain), will be taken on by the seven boroughs most affected, with a provisional estimate of a programme of £80 million and 360 staff. Given that many other GLC services like the fire brigade, the arts centres, the water services and the traffic schemes are being transferred wholesale to quangos or newly created boards, Livingstone's perennial optimism is not entirely misplaced. A phoenix GLC — even his expanded version taking on transport, water and health — is feasible.

But by then, the man who played the key role both in the growth of the GLC as a political force and its demise, thanks to Mrs Thatcher's personal antagonism towards him, will no longer be there. Never a nuts and bolts man, Livingstone, the prospective Labour parliamentary candidate for Brent East, has already left much of the day to day business in the hands of his new deputy, Michael Ward. 'After 1 April, I'm off to write a book about the lessons of the GLC and answer some of the 400 requests to speak that are sitting on my desk. I'm not standing in the local elections as I'd rather concentrate on Brent East.'

The line the book will take is not difficult to imagine: 'The GLC will be seen as a landmark . . .'

Christian Wolmar writes on local government for the Observer.

Madame Frankenstein's Monster

The London Co-ordinating Committee of Successor Councils (LCC) is made up of one Councillor from each borough. It has the power to establish London-wide committees but is reluctant to do so because it is currently controlled by the Tories. Labour hopes to gain control in the 1986 elections. Its remit is to co-ordinate the handover of functions and, where it deems necessary, to establish committees of all or some boroughs to undertake services. Chaired by Peter Bowness, leader of Croydon Council.

The London Residuary Body will take on all the GLC's assets and various functions not allocated by 1 April. Its members are appointed by the government and are largely old men brought back from retirement, since the Body is supposed to be wound up within five years after it has sold all the assets and found a home for the GLC's pension fund. It has also become a dumping ground for services like Hampstead Heath and traffic lights which the boroughs and government have been unable to agree on. Chaired by Sir Godfrey 'Tag' Taylor, former Tory chair of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

The Inner London Education Authority will be directly elected and will continue to occupy part of the County Hall complex.

Other all-London bodies include the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority which will take on the fire brigade; the London Waste Disposal Regulatory Authority to oversee the disposal of hazardous waste; the London Boroughs Grants Committee to allocate grants to voluntary organisations; and the London Planning Advisory Committee which has a limited planning role. All, except the last, have one member from each borough, and are therefore currently controlled by the Tories. ●

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MEDIA

Press probers look for new home

JOAN SMITH

WHEN A DC-10 airliner crashed in the Forest of Ermenonville, near Paris, in March 1974, several newspapers reported the cause of the accident as a bomb. The *Daily Telegraph* stuck to this line for two days. The *Sunday Times* sent two reporters to the scene on the afternoon of the crash, even though it happened on a Sunday and its offices were deserted. Nearly two years later, the paper was able to tell the real story of what had happened: a faulty cargo door, which should have been modified after an earlier and non-fatal accident involving a DC-10, had been left unchanged. Moreover, the records of McDonnell Douglas, the company which made the plane, falsely showed that the work had been done; the company had tried to foist the blame for the crash onto an innocent baggage handler.

The *Sunday Times* inquiry into the DC-10 crash was a model of investigative journalism. It was a lengthy, painstaking and expensive operation, and one which involved an unsuccessful court appearance by the paper in the US in an attempt to enforce rights to information enshrined in the American constitution. It required a massive commitment to a tangled story with no guarantee that the truth would ever see the light of day.

When I was training to be a journalist ten years ago, investigative journalism was what every ambitious and idealistic young reporter aspired to. Most of us did not distinguish between the kind of inquiry described above and leak journalism; we were just as much fired by the Watergate revelations as by investigative journalism proper. (And rightly so, since one tends to be contingent on the other.)

Things have changed. If another Thalidomide scandal happened today, where is the journalistic organisation which would take on the case and fight to the bitter end on behalf of the victims? (The *Sunday Times* battled for more than six years, and went before 37 judges, for the right to publish). The *Insight* team, the standard-bearer of the *Sunday Times*'s commitment to investigative journalism, was disbanded more than two years ago.

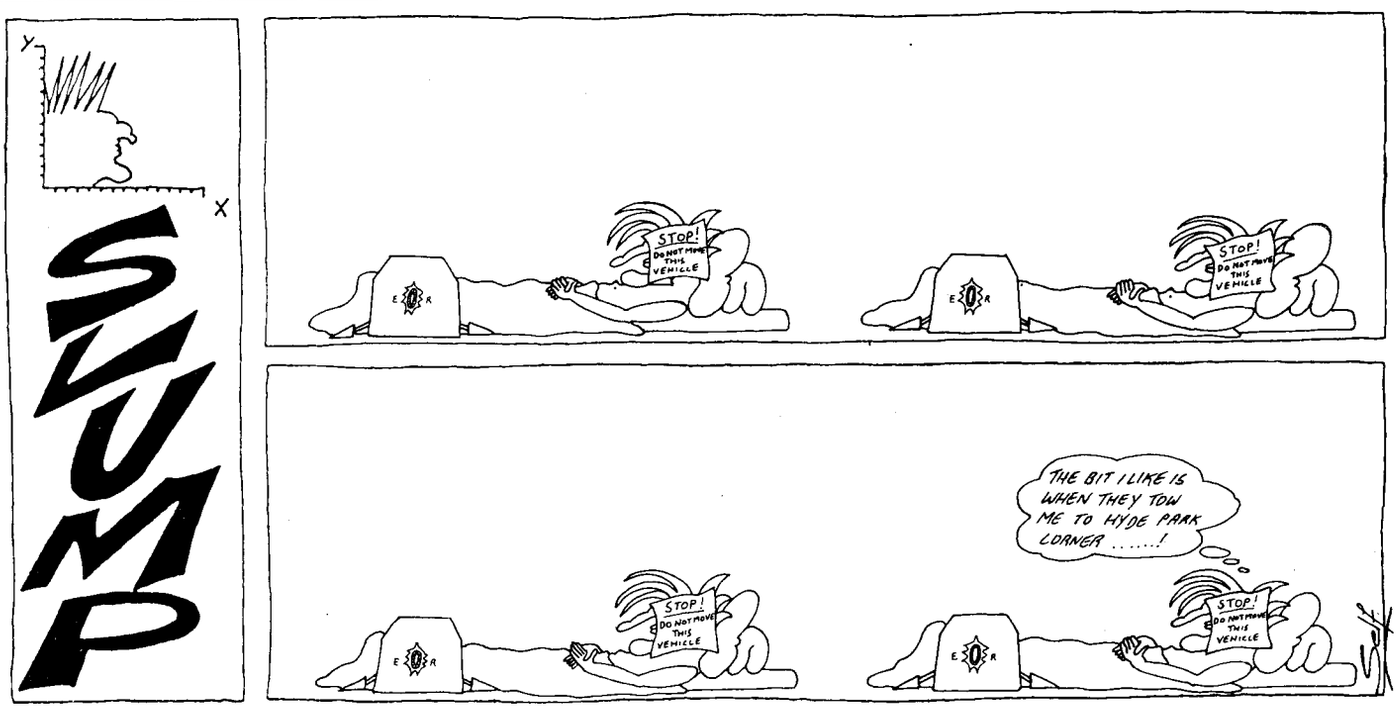
News International (Murdoch's empire) has a new campaign unit. It has yet to be tested, but is more likely to air matters of social concern than to investigate and redress the malpractice of the powerful. The *Observer* employs some of the few remaining old-style investigative journalists, but lacks both the space and the resources for a campaign which might take several years. The *Guardian* has never really gone in for investigative journalism, and its record on handling leaks is hardly an unblemished one. The *Mirror*'s commitment to investigative journalism can be gauged by its willingness to part with one of its best journalists, John Pilger.

What about other parts of the media? Television's record is better; Yorkshire Television's *First Tuesday* programme, *World In Action*, and *20-20 Vision* spring to mind. But even here, all is far from well. This column has several times commented on the BBC's handling of the fracas over the *Rough Justice* programme which resulted in the release of a man who had been imprisoned for a crime he did not commit. It is only in a climate where investigative journalism is in decline, both in practice and in status, that the BBC could behave in so disgraceful a manner without causing an outcry in the rest of the media.

Anyone who has been involved in this type of journalism knows it can be rough stuff. The view in those days was that it would be strange if an investigative reporter *didn't* attract complaints of this sort.

What has changed? I don't suppose many people would argue that we live in such a fair, compassionate society that there is nothing left to investigate. On the contrary, any good campaigning journalist with the backing and resources of a major national newspaper would have a field day. The answer lies, I'm sure, in the political shift which has taken place in Fleet Street. Interfering, power-hungry proprietors are, from instinct, antipathetic to probing, dirt-washing journalism. They approve it only when it chimes with their own prejudices. And in this area, where Fleet Street leads, the broadcasting organisations follow.

The one place where investigative journalism is flourishing is in publishing. Newspapers have always gone in for book deals, but in the past the products tended to be very much a compilation of what had already appeared in the form of articles. If we look at two major stories of the last 18 months — the sinking of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior*, and the questions raised by the death of Hilda Murrell — national newspapers were slow off the mark in the first place, and then afforded them only fitful coverage. It is the world of publishing which has taken them up with gusto — two books on Hilda Murrell, three on the *Rainbow Warrior*. I wonder what today's keen young journalists aspire to? □



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DIARY

Claudia Wright

Athens

I have a favourite place in the hills just north of Athens. Not in the summer but just now, in mid-winter, is the best time to visit. A mild earthquake rumbled recently but harmlessly down the slope to the sea. Sunday hunters pop their shotguns to disturb the silence, if not the hares. The wild ilex is in berry; a blossom, like a yellow lady's-slipper, hangs overhead; there are purple toadstools; the wind shuffles the pines; and you can taste the moisture in the air. The sun isn't warm enough to burn away the mist, which rolls down the valley, overtaking and blotting out the afternoon. Crude cans that have been nailed to the pine trunks rust in wait for the spring sap to flow, to make resin for the wine.

The place is called Amphiareion after the god of healing who was said to inhabit the spring. Those who needed a cure slaughtered a ram and then lay down for the night wrapped inside its bloody, sinewy skin. The dreams that followed were thought to be the incubations of the god, with oracular as well as healing powers. Wandering quite undisturbed between the wet stone stumps of the ancient sanatorium, there is something warm, comical, and reassuring about the ghosts of all these woolly half-rams, half-men lying here, hoping for a revelation.

○

Some of Greece's less than oracular ghosts continue to make their appearances in sheepskins. The bookshops along Solonos Street have been displaying copies of C.M. Woodhouse's latest book, *The Rise and Fall of the Greek Colonels*. This might more appropriately be titled 'The Rise and Rise of Constantine Karamanlis', the right-wing president whose replacement last year failed to open up the void in Greek politics that Karamanlis expected to swallow everyone impudent enough to doubt his indispensability to Greek democracy. Early in January the newspapers were able to report that the 1955 Foreign Office archives just opened in London had revealed the judgement — by British officials of the day — that Karamanlis had been the favourite of the Greek Royal Palace and 'the man . . . of the United States'. This less than surprising revelation did, however, draw out another man of the United States, former right-wing defence minister, Evangelos Averof, who declared in a letter to *Ta Nea* that Karamanlis's rise to power had nothing to do with either the Palace or the Americans, but 'simply that the United States, after observing Greek politics, considered him a capable man to lead the government'. Such hair-splitting might be easily dismissed if it were not so plain that the United States continues to 'observe' Greek politics and draw conclusions about who is, and who is not 'capable to lead the government'.

○

I don't know why so many travellers to Greece, even Greeks themselves, denigrate the appeal of Athens. This is a city that is always alive, never falls silent. Men and women preserve the old-fashioned custom of looking strangers in the eye — they don't omit the erogenous zones, but Athenian men seem to do their looking at those on the sly, from the rear. This allows the women to enjoy the luxury of trading glances, before deciding whether to ignore the flashes of animality that follow. Athenians also enjoy talking so much they even do it with children — a habit that must have mutated out of the Americano-Saxon race or been transferred to an attachment to dogs. This, come to think of it, may account for how clean the Athens footpaths are. Walking everywhere, as it's easy to do, it seems to me that all the streets of Athens lead uphill, each to its own Mt Olympus, obliging the Athenians, as a daily fact of life, to acknowledge that the gods are alert and on watch above them. Perhaps this persuades the Greeks not to enjoy their humanity less because of the apparent shortcomings. At home in Washington, where there is less inclination to acknowledge the shortcomings and greater readiness to elevate men to divinities — where hubris is a lifestyle — there is no feeling at all in the city after the offices close — and no one dares to look at anyone else out of hyper-caution and fear.

○

ROGER WODDIS

No, don't laugh

According to an article in Jane's Defence Weekly, Soviet 'Spetsnaz' agents have infiltrated the peace camp at Greenham Common

I've seen 'em, I've seen 'em.
The women of Greenham,
Who huddle together at Moscow's behest;
The aim of their mission
Is nuclear fission
And doing their damndest disarming the West.

Those lesbian ladies
Are agents from Hades,
In league with the Devil and tied to his tail —
A thing hard to credit,
But dammit, I've read it
And scanned every word in the *Son* and the *Male*.

I shudder with horror
And think of Gomorrah
Whenever I see them or look at the news.
Will no one restrain 'em,
Or cane 'em or brain 'em,
Those maddening madams who monitor cruise?

Though common sense conquers,
Admitting I'm bonkers
Is surely a sign that I'm perfectly sane.
My tiles may be slipping,
But what is more gripping
Or nuder or lewder or cruder than Jane?

Athens also has the perfect antidote to the food fetishism that is rampant in other cities. I'm not a food fetishist myself — unless you define as psychopathological the view that the most enjoyable food to eat is the food someone else cooks, puts on the table, and clears up afterwards. My idea of restaurants is that they are basic necessities of life and therefore should never be places where decor is more interesting than the meal, or where tables are booked out for weeks in advance. So it's a pleasure to sit down at Dourambeis of Piraeus for the evening, or Psaropoulos of Glyfada on Sunday afternoons, visit the kitchen to pick out my fish and wait for it to return to the plain table on a simple plate. Once a year I can exhaust my hankering for squid and indulge in the Dourambeis winter speciality, that isn't so much a food for me as a memory of the tree outside my childhood window — stewed quinces.

○

There is no need for food at all at Perevoli *T'Ouranou* ('orchard of the sky'), the *rebetiko* cabaret to which I would go every night if it were not for the cigarette smoke. Hidden behind a common door on an alley across from Hadrian's Arch, this is a large round room like a circus tent and seated in a line across the front of the stage area are the singers. There is a piano, accordion, flute, guitar, bouzoukis of various sizes and pitches. But this is no show of bucolic folk life. *Rebetiko* means a lust for the lower depths; the songs are of passionate and miserable love affairs, infidelity, loneliness, hashish-fed hallucinations. The music developed in the refugee quarters of Athens and other cities to which the Greeks of Asia Minor fled after the Turkish massacres of 1922. *Rebetiko*, it is said, was refined in the jails of Greece. The singers can be beautiful or nondescript in appearance, but by tradition they show no emotion as they sing. The feeling is in the rhythm, the words and in the crack and wail of the voice — still a recognisably oriental sound. *Rebetiko* seems especially to stir the women — they will get up and dance with each other, whether or not they've brought along men. And if one of the male performers is exceptional, the women in the audience shower him with carnations. Athens is the kind of place where the men, once in a while, deserve the accolade.

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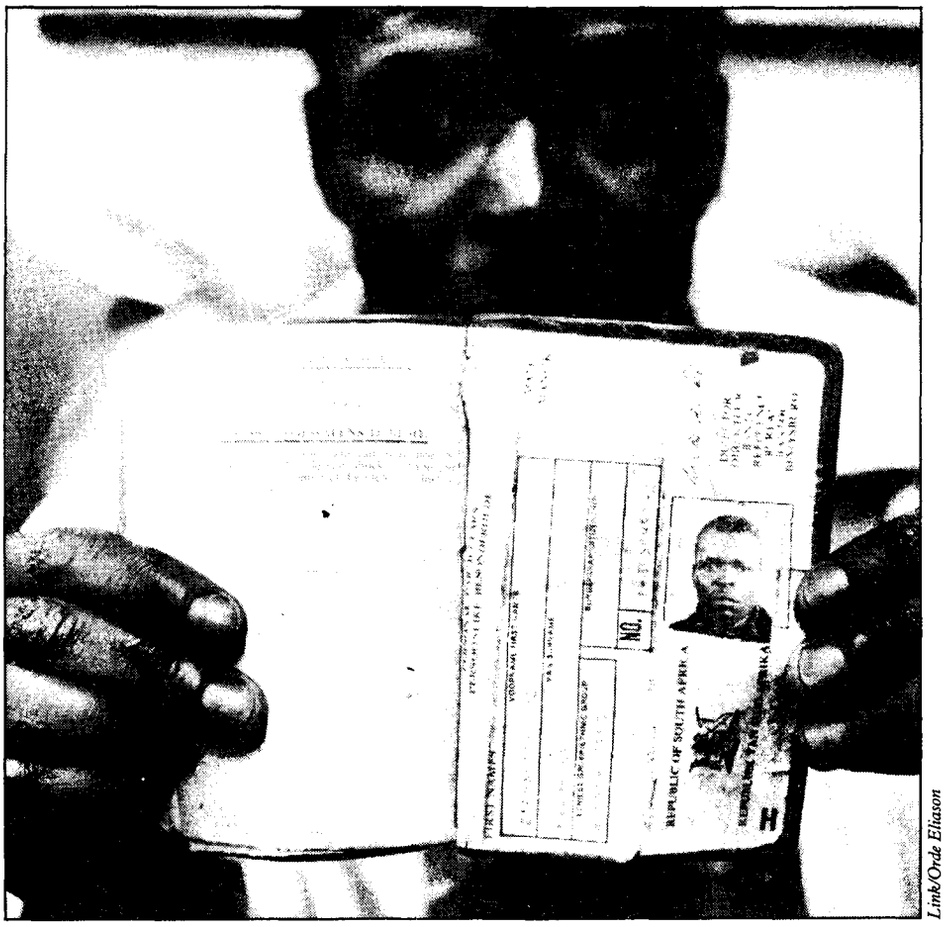
LET'S FIND A NICE NEW NAME FOR APARTHEID



Link/Orde Eliason

Seen: the essential passbook. Unseen: the massive bureaucracy which enforces its use

Next week Botha once again addresses the nation. This time he's adopting a 'don't expect anything and you won't be disappointed' strategy. Meanwhile, apartheid remains intact. PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK reports

Johannesburg

DECADES AFTER the word 'apartheid' slipped from the vocabulary of South African government politicians, the battery of laws which govern people's lives and deny them political rights on the basis of their skin colour is still firmly intact.

Next week when the South African State President Mr P.W. Botha opens parliament he is expected to make yet another announcement on the state of the nation — an opportunity for the Nationalist government momentarily to regain the political centre-stage.

But speculating what 'reforms' Botha has in store for the country is more tentative this time. Last August, after massive pre-publicity, the president delivered his belligerent speech, which sent the rand down to a record low on international currency exchange markets.

This time round the government is trying to dampen the speculation, applying the principle that whatever they are going to announce will look a lot better if expectations are not too high. The main point is to get across the message, particularly to South Africa's Western friends, that the country's Nationalist government is genuinely bent on reform.

In fact, they have been putting this message across for years, and continue to be believed by some. They will be believed by more if, as now seems possible, the repression of dissident political activity under the state of emergency is at last successful in creating a semblance of calm in the black townships.

Already, the rand has been creeping up again since the beginning of the year — a sign of some return of investor confidence. The Swiss banker, Fritz Leutwiler, who is mediating in South Africa's debt crisis, has expressed confidence that the Botha government is headed towards significant reforms this year.

THE TWO CRUCIAL areas which Botha is expected to tackle in this session of parliament are influx control, more commonly known as the pass laws, and the first steps toward a new constitutional model which will include blacks on a federal basis. This is likely to be hailed by influential people in the West as a step forward, though there is no suggestion in even the most speculative accounts that the underlying premises of apartheid are to be addressed.

At the root of the apartheid system — and making it all possible — is the Population Registration Act of 1950. One of the first important measures of the Nationalist Party after it came to power in 1948, this act classifies every South African according to race and ethnic group. It serves as the basis for a multitude of other laws, including the new constitution, which was welcomed as a reformist step when drawn up in 1983, even though it provided separate chambers of parliament for whites, 'coloureds' and Indians, as defined by the act. Blacks were excluded completely and the white House of Assembly retained effective control.

The Population Registration Act also lays the ground for residential apartheid, contained in the notorious Group Areas Act, which has not been reformed. Whites, Indians, 'coloureds' and blacks are still forced to live in rigidly segregated residential zones and use separate hospitals and other public amenities. The government says that blacks will soon be able to acquire land outside the bantustans for the first time since the Nationalists came to power — but only in their 'own' areas, the barren ghettoes outside the 'white' cities.

While racial signs have been removed from public buildings and whites can buy in the same shops as blacks, 'petty apartheid' remains enforced on a local level, usually outside the big cities in places not frequented by foreign visitors. Pretoria's public parks are still out of bounds to blacks and many small towns have curfew laws requiring blacks to get out of the 'white' areas at night.

Education still remains rigidly segregated. Because of the establishment of a separate education department in each of the 10 ethnic bantustans, there are today 15 education departments in South Africa — one each for whites, coloureds and Indians, a general department for all three groups, one for blacks outside the bantustans and the 10 bantustan departments.

THE MASS OF complicated legislation and Kafkaesque bureaucracy surrounding the pass laws serves to control rigidly where blacks may live, channels those in the bantustans into jobs

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as migrant workers and controls nearly every aspect of a black person's life. It makes criminals out of blacks who are in a city without a permit for longer than 72 hours — there have been more than 18 million pass arrests in the past 60 years.

In spite of popular misconceptions that the pass laws are being toned down, one black person is still arrested every three minutes in South Africa for not having a pass. It is this aspect of apartheid which has most agitated Western governments. Big business has demanded that the pass laws be scrapped, the multi-party President's Council recommended in a major report last year (which is expected to be a guideline for government reforms) that they should be abolished and even Botha has conceded that they are 'costly and outdated'.

But there has been talk of reforming the pass laws for almost a decade, with little sign of significant change. Civil rights groups, wary of previous government promises of reform, have warned that pass law control could anyway be applied through other laws relating to slum clearance, 'planned settlement' and 'decentralisation' laws, which are not racially discriminating *per se*, but which could be used to harass and 'control' black people.

The most pressing reform which the government will look at this year is the provision of political rights for blacks within the constitution. In his last major speech in Port Elizabeth last year, Botha said: 'The National Party is committed to the principle of a united South Africa, one citizenship and a universal franchise.' In so doing he performed an impressive semantic trick, because at the same time he said the government would not countenance one man, one vote in a unitary state.

MOST POLITICAL observers believe that the government is headed towards a geographic federation based on the four independent and six self-governing bantustans. The plan is that black rights in South Africa will be based on the existing racially separate townships, group areas and bantustans set up under the present South African government. It is this explicitly racial character of the government's version of federation which will ensure white domination.

The bantustan system — devised by former prime minister Hendrik Verwoerd as a cornerstone of apartheid — is still firmly in place and a fifth bantustan, Kwandebele, is to be granted 'independence' later this year. This is going ahead whether the local people like it or not: more than 20 people were killed in fighting over New Year when the area of Moutse was added to Kwandebele against the will of the 120,000-strong population.

Whatever new system Botha has in mind, and there appears serious division within the government on the details, the cracking down on political activity and the refusal to deal with the outlawed African National Congress offers little hope for genuine negotiation. It confirms, rather, the view held by most observers that the government which gave the world the name 'apartheid' should not be looked to to deliver the non-racial democratic state with equal rights for all which alone will imply the end of apartheid. □

HONOURABLE RAJIV DREAMS NOT SCHEMES

PHILLIP WHITEHEAD talks to the unwilling world leader who denounces corruption in his own ranks but does not like politics

Camera Press

Rajiv Gandhi: still an outsider

THE VISITOR to India is told; you can choose your century. Most Indians cannot.

One who can is the young Prime Minister, now a year in office. His preference was lauded on every swaying street arch through which portly Congresswallahs paraded during the centenary celebrations of the ruling party in Bombay. 'We support Hon'ble Rajiv's dream of the Twenty-First Century', they read.

Some of the arches had been erected by Bombay businessmen trembling at the new crackdown on fraud and tax evasion. They, like the political careerists, are finding that the way to the top is no longer lubricated by the traditional mixture of cash and sycophancy. The Congress Party was denounced by its leader in his plenary speech as venal and out of touch with the masses. The delegates applauded — out of habit and self-preservation. Maybe he didn't mean it.

When Indira Gandhi was assassinated in 1984 the accumulation of inter-communal tension, separatist claims and political corruption had led to a profound crisis for the Republic. At that moment the best that was generally said about Rajiv Gandhi was that he was a nice young man who had no particular wish to be prime minister.

Talking to him last week it was remarkable to see what had changed. The diffident, rather portly young man at his mother's elbow, standing in for his dead brother, the more sinister Sanjay, has been replaced by a slimmer, more self-confident persona. But he still speaks of his country and his hopes for it in the tones of one who has come by accident into the political process, with the outsider's distaste for custom and practice.

Where his mother in her last years brooded, dithered, conspired, he tries the open approach. In the past, opposition parties in the States were systematically destabilised by the Centre. Defections were encouraged, splinter groups cultivated. In Punjab the strident anti-Hindu Sikh extremist Bhindranwale was originally built up by Sanjay Gandhi and his Congress allies in order to weaken the more moderate Sikh Akali Dal party. The stratagem misfired. Bhindranwale pushed the Akalis aside, and after long hesitation Mrs Gandhi ordered the military action against him which was later to cost her own life as well as his.

Rajiv Gandhi tried a new approach. With Hindu-Sikh relations at their lowest ebb he called elections in the Punjab, where they had been postponed by the state of emergency and watched with equanimity as his Congress(I) headed for a Pyrrhic defeat at the hands of the Akali Dal. He says now; 'We lost the election by one per cent, but perhaps we were lucky to lose. Because really it was us and the Akalis against the extremists. In that sense we won, and now the Akalis have to face the terrorists, and have made a good start in that'.

RAJIV MOVED quickly to an accord with the Akalis, an agreement to concede their long pressed claim to the city of Chandigarh, which Punjab shares as a capital with its neighbour, Hindi-speaking Haryana. In exchange Haryana was to receive contiguous border areas of Punjab with Hindi-speaking majorities, and a guaranteed date by which a new canal would bring the waters of the Punjab to irrigate Haryana.

This weekend that agreement faces its critical test, for Chandigarh is scheduled to be transferred to Punjab on 26 January. An independent commission on border transfers has run into flak from both sides about the villages to be transferred, if they have a Hindi-speaking majority.

Everything hinges on the census in one village, Kandu Lhera, where the wildest accusations of intimidation are being made by both Haryana and Punjab. Since many villagers speak both Hindi and Punjabi the answers the enumerators get will depend on the kind of questions they ask. If Kandu Khera goes to Haryana it takes a score of other villages with it which are now a Hindi enclave within Punjab.

Rajiv Gandhi has staked a lot on the accord, and the parallel agreement with the regional party which has come to power in Assam. 'We are there as umpires', he says. 'But the feed-

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back from the enumerators suggests that the count will be very close, maybe 50-50. Whatever it is we shall keep to the letter of the agreement.' Can he afford to do this if his party, snubbed in Punjab and Assam, side-tracked in Congress-run Haryana, turns against him for conceding too much? How long can he be an unpolitical politician, treating with his opponents, denouncing corruption in his own ranks?

When you ask him this the reply is one few western politicians would dare to give: 'What else can I do? The party is a complete shambles from top to bottom. At the time of independence we had good people in the leadership, though we needed more than we had because we needed to fill both government and opposition. But those people have all gone now, and those who replaced them were not the same calibre. Nevertheless they remained, and they are there still. We have to have new talent to rebuild the party.'

To the astonishment of Indian politicians he proposes an anti-defection law to prevent that endemic curse of the system of the 'mid-term switch' by elected politicians from one party to another, much exploited by Congress in the past. (One of the minor pleasures of Delhi last week was to see a visibly discomforted Shirley Williams called to explain after a lecture why such an anti-defection law had not been introduced in British politics!)

The anti-corruption drive has reached into the business community too. 'An honest Indian businessman is an almost extinct species' the magazine *Link* wrote this month, detailing the raids on bankers, liquor barons and film stars which have struck terror into the Bombay jet set. Consequently the government's tax revenue rose by 25 per cent in the second half of last year. The fact that some of those arrested had been at school with Rajiv was noted with astonishment. He argues that the anti-corruption drive will net an extra $5 billion in tax this year, with a similar amount being invested in industry instead of salted away in the black economy.

Rajiv speaks the language of reform capitalism, not the socialist hopes of his grandfather, Pandit Nehru, nor the levelling rhetoric of his mother. He wants an Indian economic miracle, built on the abandonment of that mesh of licensing controls which have helped India to self-sufficiency only on the terms of the vested interests. 'Don't think we are just boys playing with computers', he says. 'We have to have better technical training and the latest technology to help agriculture as well as industry. That means better implements, genetic research, computer prediction of climatic change. And we have to awaken a dissatisfaction with their lot among the masses, whom you see smiling in every village although they have nothing, so that they can move the country forward'.

It is not, he argues ingenuously, just to awaken a new materialism. There has to be fulfilment too. Some of the young managerial elite he has brought into government, harder men with crisper views, would not put it so. Their impatience with India's ways is not softened by Rajiv's patent humanity. Leaving, you tremble for him, this unwilling dynast turned world leader, when the going is no longer good. □

CHINA

PARTY LEADERS DITCH THE RICH

Mass discontent is forcing another change of line reports JONATHAN MIRSKY

DENG XIAOPING and his lieutenants are under attack from the facts — which, as the Chinese say, teach hard lessons. The latest crop of bad news — about prices, grain supplies, and social inequality — has given Deng's adversaries further chances to question his reforms, or at least their scope and pace.

In the past, the criticism was ideologically easy to deal with. Old cadres and soldiers feared for their positions. Maoists and Gang of Four allies dreaded reprisals. But for the last few months the critics have focused both on the reformers' patriotism — university students were furious that foreigners, especially Japanese, appeared to be taking over the country's modernisation — and on their morality — why were so many Party officials involved in corruption? (See *NS* 13 December 1985). Now a new target has presented in itself: the people's standard of living, the one area which the Dengists had sworn to improve.

But the Dengists are nothing if not pragmatists. Although there is a certain amount of exhortation in the press to stop complaining, during the last fortnight the leadership has announced changes in policies which can justifiably be termed climb-downs.

Naturally, to put on the brakes just as the excellent results are announced of the last five year plan, is infuriating for the Dengists. During the plan's term, the economy expanded more than during the entire Maoist epoch. But as a recent Chinese economic journal observed: 'The loss of economic control in the second half of 1984 and the results of implementing the ensuing control measures show fully the complexity and difficulty of restructuring China's economy'.

During the five years of the plan, for instance, the commodity price index went up by nearly 19 per cent, and although official voices were immediately heard reminding consumers that their wages had far exceeded prices — 70 per cent up in the cities, over 100 per cent in the countryside — it has been recognised, as statistics roll in from the rural areas, that most Chinese are still very poor. Peasants' incomes have doubled to not quite £100 a year, a demonstration of the true povety in Mao's day.

As Vice-premier Tian Jiyun said at the Party's rural work conference in December, 'Owing to natural conditions and uneven economic development, there are still some rural areas in China where tens of millions of people have not yet freed themselves from poverty and are still without adequate food and clothing, although some economic progress has been made by them in recent years'. For such people, and the millions of city dwellers waiting for the pay rises the State still cannot afford, price hikes which Tian admits are often well over the national average remind them of the skyrocketing inflation that eventually brought down the old regime of Chiang Kaishek.

Accordingly, Vice-premier Tian, one of the 'relatively youthful' newly elevated Dengists, has admitted there is indeed a problem of too large a rise in the commodity price index, especially for city people on fixed wages. Even if it means limiting farmers' incomes, Tian has promised, prices are to be frozen in the coming year. This is a dramatic reversal for policy makers who insisted that prices must float to a level dictated by market forces.

GRAIN SHORTFALLS have forced another step back. Although the 1985 harvest was the third highest since 1949, it was also 7 per cent lower than the year before, an embarassment because the leaders had guaranteed that with excellent policies even bad weather could never again cause harvests to fall.

This year the weather was very bad indeed and, because of government directives, 2.5 million hectares had been given over to crops other than grain, while millions of grain growers had been encouraged to pursue more lucrative pursuits. The Party's *People's Daily* warned that the masses had begun muttering about the millions who died between 1959 and 1961 as a result of Mao's lunatic grain policies.

Since 1979, the central government's investment in agriculture has dropped by 50 per cent. This will now go up, Tian indicated, and ex-farmers now working in profitable rural enterprises are going to be taxed to make grain growing profitable as well. Peasants will be interested to hear that they will be allowed to negotiate the price of grain, which until recently was fixed. But everyone will remember that until very recently grain farmers were being chivvied to give up and do something else for a living.

Finally, the Party has reversed its spectacularly un-Maoist stand on displays of wealth. Until recently the press had trumpeted the successes of hugely rich farmers, who were told they had no responsibility to share their wealth with less fortunate neighbours. Merely being rich was enough. It would inspire the less clever and more idle.

But the press began to fill with stories of resentful country folk beating up the new rich. Deng's leading adversary, Politburo member Chen Yun, who had warned against grain shortfalls, had also attacked the new cult of selfishness, adding that there were very few rich people anyway. 'We were a little divorced from reality in our propaganda work', Vice-premier Tian says. From now on, where they do exist, the rich can expect to be taxed.

All this creates an ultimate paradox for the Party. Until now it has succeeded by not interfering and by letting greed and ambition motivate the peasants and workers. Now that problems have arisen, if the Party moves in to intervene heavily it will look to many as if, once again, China's leaders are veering away on a new course. That would be familiar, but demoralizing. □

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LETTERS

Tour de force

D. Glastonbury, Bristol

I'd like to do what I can do to set the record straight on the subject of Yorkshire Tours (*NS* 10 January). I spent Christmas on one of their excursions — to Hamam-Bou-Hadjar, Algeria — and will never forget it!

To make a fuss if things go wrong is just not to enter into the spirit of things. Yorkshire Tours openly puts two fingers up to the standards so rigorously upheld by conventional tour companies. That is part of the fun. The additional hassles of the ferry strike — it affected us, too — were really par for the course, and indeed seemed very trivial after some of the other difficulties we encountered.

To really appreciate Yorkshire Tours you must take them for what they are — anarchic but basically well-meaning, and committed to the wholesome principle of international friendship. A Yorkshire tour is an adventure, and if you expect anything less you will be disappointed.

Landon Temple, Progressive Tours, London W2

Miscellany's rude comments on our gallant contemporaries at Yorkshire Tours referred to them as a 'progressive' tour company. To avoid possible confusion may I point out that they are not connected in any way with Progressive Tours, which is working in a similar field.

However we have every sympathy for the dilemma they faced over visas for people re-routed to an unexpected country through a ferry strike. I would even support their Clochemerle solution of locking those without visas in the coach loo, if it worked.

However, the Yorkshire Tours spokesperson is unduly pessimistic when he says it's no use arguing with frontier officials. He should consult a stalwart pensioner from Barnsley who last year took 25 passengers by train from Budapest through the USSR and Mongolia on the TransSiberian to Beijing without either visas or train tickets — and brought them back by the same route! His documents had all been mislaid in Budapest but he travelled without any delays.

Harry Edwards, Sutton, Surrey

The *Miscellany* item about Yorkshire Tours inspired another great Wheeler cartoon, but I must rush to support its victim, who is sincere, philanthropic and endearingly unconventional.

His prices obviously preclude luxurious frills, and he realises that at any border controversy there are always two or three people in a coach-load who are eager to outwit authority, so lets them 'have a go'.

I've been on five memorable trips with the company — and would like to sample everything they offer.

Lorca as a depressed gay

Paul Binding, Jackson, Mississippi, USA

At the end of his review of my *Lorca: the Gay Imagination* (*NS* 3 January) Gregory Woods says: 'If I am taking an unreasonably critical line I do so *because* the book covers more new ground than should be expected of any study written so long after its subject's death.' It must surely be unusual for a reviewer to admit to being unreasonable during the course of a review, and I should perhaps be grateful for the subsequent crumbs of praise. However, they only increase my wish to have been given a review of the book I actually wrote rather than an extended petulant cry for the one Gregory Woods would have liked.

A critical examination of a writer's *oeuvre* — such as mine — simply doesn't seem to interest him. He offers no comments on where my book differs in its literary evaluative emphases from previous studies of Lorca — which it does quite markedly — or, surely important in an article of Mr Wood's length and bias, that it contains the first discussion in context of the *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, still unavailable in English and overtly homosexual in subject.

Further, I cannot but feel uneasy about Gregory Woods's references (and lack of them) to Lorca himself. In his anxiety not to give the impression of 'an anguished Lorca' Woods cites characteristically hyperbolic words of Neruda's about Lorca and laughter. Neruda came to know Lorca *after* his two years' long 'crisis', during which the poet himself, and his friends and family, both spoke and wrote about his acute anguish and depression. This period has been copiously described and analysed by those in a position to know, one of whom, also a renowned Lorquian scholar, gave me a most vivid account of it. It is altogether preposterous to have Lorca's condition then — out of which came some of the greatest poetry of the century — waived aside in the interest of some ideological belief that no good gay can be depressed. As for the post-crisis Lorca — if there is not anguish (as well as other qualities) in the *Llante*, *Yerma*, and above all in the *Sonetos* (to keep the list short), then I'm a monkey's uncle.

What the review reveals is a sad tendency among critics to feel a kind of mystic identification with a famous writer on account of his sexual orientation, an identification that precludes proper concentration on his productions. Occasionally Gregory Woods raises his head above me, so to speak, as one to whom the mysteries of Lorca's art have been miraculously revealed.

Somewhat to my surprise, Mr Woods calls me — completely correctly — a 'gay critic'. He who wishes to be this must consider the second word as important as the first.

Maire O'Shea needs defending

Sara Spain, London SE3

The news item on Dr Maire O'Shea (10 January) was very disappointing. There was no comment on the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the abuses from its implementation, e.g. detention incommunicado, heavy interrogation often resulting in spurious confessions, and the intimidatory effect on the Irish community in this country.

Nor were the chances of a fair trial in a case brought under the conspiracy laws discussed. In such a trial the defendant has to prove her/his innocence, which is the reverse of normal practice where the onus is on the prosecution to prove guilt. Although these are trials by jury, the jury must find it hard not to be influenced by the relative secrecy and the exaggerated security measures which are the hallmark of such trials.

Dr O'Shea belongs to that rare breed of psychiatrists who concentrate on getting their patients *out* of hospital or prison. She also has an honourable record of political activity in the Labour Party and in her union, ASTMS, which, at its annual delegate conference last summer, unanimously passed an emergency motion of support for her and which has provided two observers to cover the trial. Dr O'Shea's only 'crime' is to have defended vigorously innocent people wrongfully accused of criminal acts, as she herself now is. She needs to be defended now.

The legal costs of his case will be enormous and Dr O'Shea has been refused legal aid. She is not a wealthy woman and so donations would be gratefully received by the Dr Maire O'Shea Defence Fund, c/o 448 Stratford Rd, Birmingham 11. More information from the same address.

Take me to your Leader
BY MOANIN' MINNIE
SOMEONE has diverted HALLEY'S COMET and sent it plummeting towards LIBYA.
On the comet, Titus Blurb and the indigenous Halloids consider their options...
BIGGLES! CAN WE SLOW THIS THING DOWN A BIT?
SURE, BOSS. WE'LL TRY FOR A CRASH LANDING IN THE DESERT
OKAY! RUGGLES, FIND OUT ALL YOU CAN ABOUT LIBYA, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE LIKELY LIBYAN RESPONSE TO SUDDEN VISITS FROM ALIEN BEINGS
OKAY BOSS!
SEEMS TO BE SOME DISPUTE ABOUT WHO RUNS LIBYA, BOSS. MOST LIKELY CONTENDERS ARE COLONEL GADDHAFFI, COLONEL QADHAFI AND COLONEL KHADAFFI
AND THEY'RE ALL CRAZY
IMPACT HERE WE COME!
SPLAT!
JOHN MINNION
?
?
?
?
?
?

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THE CHILLING EFFECT

Paranoia is a potent political force. When it is a fear of government surveillance it can paralyse democracy. That fear may focus on the wrong objects but, argues DUNCAN CAMPBELL, it is not without reason

THEY HAVE BEEN watching me. For at least seven of the last nine years, they have tapped my telephone. Sometimes, they followed me around. And I am not paranoid. They really were out to get me, if they could. I am of interest to surveillance organisations as a journalist who investigates technology and its role in military or intelligence matters. But many other people also fear their phone might be tapped, their mail opened, their movements followed.

At first, my answers to these anxieties seem comforting. Almost nobody's phone is tapped. Ask yourself how much it would cost every week to record, transcribe, examine, read and take appropriate action over the average person's calls. And even then, what value does tapping have? In seven years' tapping of my own phone, nothing was accomplished except to make me angry, not afraid.

Almost nobody is watched. Think how much it costs to train, employ and equip the necessary dozen or more people needed for the full time physical surveillance of one person. Remember to allow for overtime payments, sick pay, national insurance . . . and luncheon vouchers. Even the secret police have to eat.

Even when the secret police are not at lunch, their efforts can rival the Keystone Cops. I was once tailed round London by a convoy of identical brown Hillman Hunters — with identical members of the brown raincoat brigade inside. Of course we aren't being watched full time. And even if it sometimes happens, there may very well be no result.

But many people are certainly scared that the watchers and listeners are out there, unseen. What they experience is the 'chilling effect' of government behaviour. One woman who has felt that cold breath wrote to ask: 'Why should I be watched? I've never been involved in crime or politics.'

This is a 'democratic society'; yet she equates politics with crime. Lots of people do — and they are, as a result, very much afraid to exercise their rights as citizens.

In the United States, the Supreme Court has brought many judgments on the 'chilling effect'. They explain it this way: If the conduct of government and other public agencies is such that the ordinary person may have cause to fear the intrusion of officials in the course of the lawful exercise of individual rights and human liberties, then that government behaviour has an unlawful 'chilling effect' on freedom.

Surveillance technology intensifies the 'chilling effect'. With advanced, sophisticated technology, a totalitarian or authoritarian state may try to determine and control efficiently the ways that its subjects are permitted to think and act.

At present rapid progress is being made in the ability of computers to 'comprehend' speech and recognise visual images. When these developments become more sophisticated, computers will be able automatically to transcribe and, to a limited extent, interpret human speech. Telephone tapping could then become a widespread, completely automatic process.

Visual recognition techniques are also developing fast. The first glimmering of tomorrow's technologies of this kind include computerised scanners. They have already been tried out on three British motorways. The scanner computers automatically read vehicle number plates, and flash a warning signal if the vehicle is of interest of police.

Giant computer databanks necessarily play a central role in the demonology of Big Brother technology. This is not without good reason. The power that computers have to bring together information, then sort and collate it has been growing exponentially for three decades. It will continue to grow.

ONE REMARKABLE system of recording information about the population at large is being developed fast but with no accompanying publicity. Since 1966, all police forces have been asked to appoint Local Intelligence Officers usually inside major police stations. These Local Intelligence Officers — sometimes called 'collators' — are required to assemble a 'memory databank' on anyone and everything in their area. Individual area constables — nowadays they're called 'community police' — are required, as their first duty, to feed information to the databanks.

In these national, official job specifications, community police are instructed that they should aim at recruiting 'at least one informant in every street'. The community constable is instructed to cultivate the confidence of other officials whom the public trusts, and anyone 'who is in a position to give information' gained through personal confidence. The instructions say that the 'amount of information' passed to the Local Intelligence Officer by an area constable 'will indicate his effectiveness'.

The basis for a nationwide network of informants and memory databanks is thus already in place. About twenty per cent of the entire adult population are already on local police files. The files include not just those accused, convicted or suspected of crime — but also all the victims of crime, the witnesses and anyone else who 'comes to notice' of the police.

Cross referenced against each personal dossier may be addresses, vehicles used, often the names of children, parents, or relatives, the type of home they have and any piece of gossip, rumour, or observation that has ever been recorded.

A second facet of this national information system is the Police National Computer. This is the most active official computer databank now in operation in Britain. In the ten years since it was set up, the number of files stored has grown from a few hundred thousand to over 50 million.

Another facet of this technology is the linking of computers. One effect of linking the Police National Computer to many

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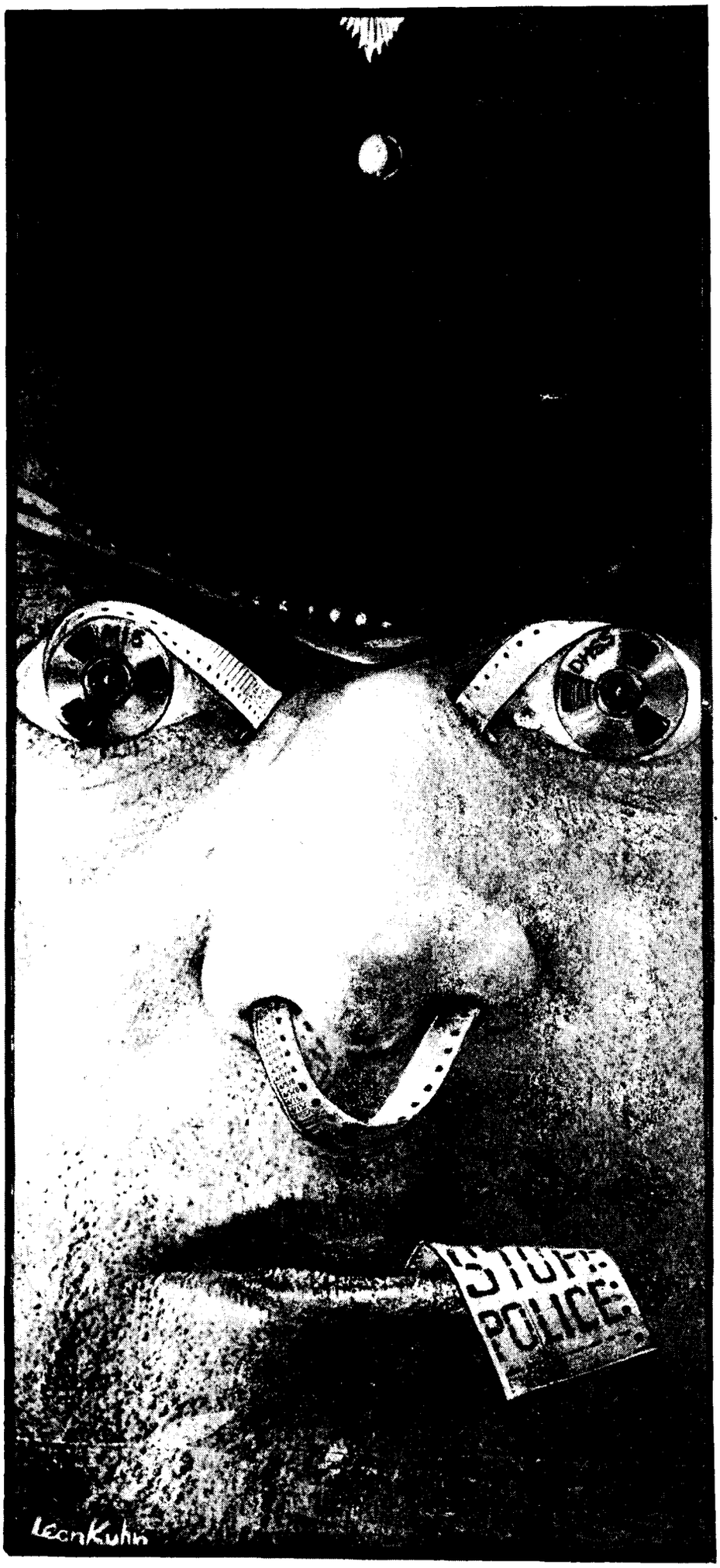

Leon Kuhn

other computers has already been to create a system of partial population registration — without asking parliament. Since 1974, through the vehicle and driving licence computer, more than half the adults in the country have had to keep the police computer notified of their current address.

The DHSS's new Departmental Central Index will be a comprehensive and efficient population register. It will contain almost everyone's age, address, financial status and family circumstances, taxes paid and benefits claimed. Its contents may be transferred, almost at whim, to police, tax, or security computers. Yet in making its plans for the Central Index, the government has not seen fit to debate the issues of principle involved. In the planning of this new scheme, I have yet to see a single reference to the issue of human rights or the dangers to liberty involved in creating a national population register. Nor has there been any reference to the need for greater public accountability of the officials involved, or a discussion of how to provide independent safeguards on how information may be used.

If we do ever get to a complete 'Big Brother' central databank, the first people I will blame will be the efficiency experts, who built the things just to make the system work better. They mean no ill, of course, but they owe no duty to making democracy work as well as their computers do.

IF YOU FIND THAT news of computer databanks discomfiting, I ask you to remember that the computers did not create these threats. The problem throughout has been the cavalier attitudes and actions of bureaucrats — and the subsequent public acquiescence in what they have done.

By focussing on technology alone, the problem of resisting authoritarianism as a political system inevitably appears as remote and inhuman, as something which the ordinary person can never hope to control. Such an approach puts beyond reach the problem of protecting privacy and freedom from the encroachment of technology.

Big Brother was and is a *political* vision. The threats which technology poses for liberty are also political in their origin and effect. To look at the danger of totalitarianism through its technology alone misses the point. It means we blunt or sacrifice our vital protective instincts on behalf of liberty.

For an illustration, take telephone tapping. People frequently express fears about tapping, whereas they do not seem to fear the possible presence of informers and snoopers in the guise of friends. I have never received a letter which suggests that a friend is an informer to the political police or the state security service.

Yet the most important way in which all secret police forces acquire personal data —

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other than from open sources — is from informants inside a group under surveillance. They may be planted agents or simply recruited. Understandably, it is easier to believe that if one is being watched, it is by the impersonal agent of a telephone tap, rather than by a friend or colleague. Yet it is they who are the main source of information about us.

THE MOST CRITICAL question about state surveillance is: what is done with the information gathered? Information on its own is of no consequence. It may as well not exist if it is not used.

The Police National Computer system provides a good example of the active use of information. It has a rapid communications network extending across the country, with video terminals in every major police station. From there, a radio system connects the computer to every police officer out on the streets. Information is normally made available within a few seconds of an enquiry being made.

This rapid access to information affects how the police deal with the public. Without the computer, police officers must make close and co-operative links with the whole community to obtain the information needed to clear up crime.

But with the computer networks, with the Local Intelligence databanks, society as a whole is put under surveillance, and the police objective alters. In order to be able to use the PNC most effectively, police officers must make as many checks as possible on each individual, in order to find the few that the computer singles out for special action. This process is called stop-checking. It requires no social support; indeed, it sacrifices any.

The random stopping of citizens to make a check on police computer records has *no* lawful basis. But it happens. This year, there will be over 10 million police computer checks on innocent people. According to the police and the government's own reports, between 90 and 99.5 per cent of all checks are on innocent people. This is not surprising — the idea is to check on what the computer has to say about as many people as possible.

On the basis of databank information — which may or may not be accurate, may or may not be legally acquired — those in authority can decide how to treat individuals. The police can, for instance, inflict extra-judicial punishments, such as harassing a citizen without the sanction of a court, or the process of publicly testing evidence. Inside security agencies, this practice is called 'countering'. It means actively disrupting the lives of those who do not accept the status quo, even though what they do and say is wholly within the law.

Last year it was shown that wholly inaccurate and extremely damaging information had for years secretly been passed on by the security services to managers of the BBC, blighting the careers of prospective television and radio employees.

Vetting processes which depend on a supply of secret personal information are also prevalent in the civil service and in British industry. This information has been used systematically to deny employment opportunities to people whom those in power considered to hold 'subversive' opinions.

SUBVERSION IS A dangerous word. The evident view of many in authority is that to disagree with the status quo is inherently anti-social. Official instructions to police Special Branches order them to keep watch on anyone who, in their view, might at some future time do something which might have an effect on public order. These official instructions allow this peculiarly political police force to extend the watch on so-called subversives as widely as they wish, or have resources for. This has in the recent past included mothers organising demonstrations for better crèche facilities. They were systematically watched and photographed as they and their infants celebrated outside local authority offices.

The existence of camera technology did not create such a situation. Arrogantly unaccountable and undemocratic police practices, and a complacent executive, did.

It is that sharp end of surveillance that matters most. It was the same in the novel *1984*. It was not Big Brother's omnipresent telescreens that actually caused oppression, but the public knowledge of what happened when you said something out of line in front of them. Above all, it was the fear of what would follow behind the windowless facade of the Ministry of Love.

Totalitarian systems of political control are about influencing the behaviour of many by the calibre of treatment that a few receive. The boundaries of freedom are determined by the behaviour of the state towards those who approach or cross the boundaries the state tries to set.

From this, it follows that the safety mechanisms needed to combat oppressive technology are, of necessity, political. They should address not the technologies *per se*, but instead create countervailing legal and bureaucratic structures which protect liberty, and ensure a plural, democratic society.

The first safety mechanism we need is a system of checks and balances, of controls on executive activity. To start with, that means a parliament, judiciary, press, who are independent of — not subservient to and worshipful of — the executive. Today, these institutions are increasingly dominated by supplicants and patrons of the current regime.

The second safety mechanism is the robust defence of fundamental human rights. Far too often, those who wish their privacy and liberty to be defended are asked: What have you got to hide? Such questioners cannot be serious. There is nothing unreasonable in insisting that individuals should have rights to control how personal information about them is handled. To argue otherwise is to suggest that the agencies and organisations who act in our name are always benignly motivated, act without prejudice of view, are even-handed in their objectives, staffed at every level with individuals who operate with impeccable care, total honesty and consistent diligence. What nonsense!

The third and most important safety mechanism is to strengthen the democratic accountability of the institutions permitted to hold a monopoly of the use of force. The problem here is to make these administrators accountable to the community — not the other way round.

The propriety of the law, and the legitimacy of the police force derive only from the common desires and aspirations of the civic community. When, as is happening increasingly, that community feels the 'chilling effect', it is not a sign of their growing unreason. It is a signal that the institutions of government are losing balance and becoming authoritarian.

SO DO NOT be distracted by computers and video screens. Recognise the enemies of liberty for who they really are, and who they always have been. Recognise the instruments of the enemies of liberty for what they always have been.

Where there is trouble now, in El Salvador and Guatemala, in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Soweto, it is not computers or monitor cameras that are taking lives and freedom. It is the old, familiar, ugly apparatus — the acrid-smelling end of the policeman's gun, the heavy riot stick lancing the air, the boot in the kidneys. It is the quieter violence of being forced into poverty and silence. It is the same here in Britain.

What we need are checks and balances: effectively enforceable fundamental rights; democratic accountability of the police and other institutions; freedom of information. Have these needs not already widely been recognised? So the problems of controlling oppressive technology are then not hopeless?

Yes, but — in Britain now, the trends of government action are all away from accountability, and democracy, and against human rights. New laws and practices have greatly extended coercive powers, and diminished accountability.

Technology can be controlled. It is under control already. But by the wrong people. □

The text of this week's Opinions *programme appears by arrangement with Channel 4 and Panoptic.*

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The Photo Source

German police dispersing Nazis and Communists after a street battle, 23 January 1933

Protest or survive

David Caute

Communist Resistance in Nazi Germany
ALLAN MERSON *Lawrence & Wishart* £15

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL British and American historians of Nazi Germany, writing in the post-war era, generally discounted or disparaged internal Communist resistance to the Third Reich. Obvious examples are Bullock, Trevor-Roper, Shirer, Wheeler-Bennett and Terence Prittie's book, *Germans against Hitler*. In the German Democratic Republic, by contrast, no effort was spared to depict the Socialist Unity Party (SED) as the sole, authentic heir to anti-Nazi resistance. Allan Merson's book, while not uncritical of the Communist Party's (KPD) record during 12 years of Fascist repression and military conquest, sets out to demonstrate that effective Communist resistance outstripped that of any other party or group.

His thesis is supported by impressive research in the North-Rhine-Westphalia archive at Dusseldorf (Gestapo files), the Federal Archive at Koblenz (records of the Nazi People's Court), the Document Centre in West Berlin and what remains of KPD records in the Institute for Marxism-Leninism in East Berlin. Merson provides a detailed record of local KPD cadres which contrived to survive arrests, trials and executions, but the final impression is that survival itself remained the Communists' primary form of 'resistance'. What is missing is clear evidence of strikes, sabotage and mutiny.

At the time of Hitler's seizure of power in 1933 the KPD leadership, under Comintern patronage, was committed to a suicidal left-sectarianism: the bourgeois-democratic institutions of the Weimar Republic (admittedly fragile) were scorned, social democracy was dismissed as 'social fascism', and the Nazi apotheosis was regarded as a short-lived prelude to a workers' revolution. The German Communist leadership did not fully abandon this utopian posture until 1935 — by which time the Nazis had so consolidated their grip on Germany that all strategies of opposition were futile. Merson seems to regard the KPD's myopia as analogous to a general's mis-estimation of the enemy's strength on the battlefield; but its deeper significance lies in the contempt for liberal values held at that time by Western Communist parties loyal to Stalinism. The Popular Front tactic belatedly introduced in 1935, like the 'People's Bloc' strategy of the post-1945 period, was merely a cynical expedient on the road to an alternative form of totalitarian society.

The repression suffered by the KPD was certainly severe. According to Merson, of 422 leading Party functionaries in 1933, 219 had been arrested by 1935, 24 had been murdered and 125 forced to emigrate. By the time Hitler's Reich disintegrated, an estimated 150,000 Communists had been 'arrested and persecuted', while more than 25,000 had been 'murdered, executed or died of ill-treatment in concentration camps'. Yet the question remains: how effective was Communist resistance to Nazi rule?

Activity was most conspicuous during the first two years. Posters, pamphlets and leaflets were printed; *Rote Fahne* appeared spasmodically in editions of 60,000; and dues were collected. Attempts were made to discredit the Nazi Labour Front and also to work within it. But, as Merson himself comments, 'the effects of the KPD's propaganda are hard to gauge.' After 1935 the KPD's cadres were so smashed that the forms of 'resistance' activity listed reduce themselves to whispering campaigns and listening to the radio — just enough to keep the Gestapo in business. Merson refers to largely unspecified 'minor sabotage', or plans for such, but what mainly emerges from his pages is the substitute gratification of creating new clandestine networks: the Sector System, etc.

The value and virtue of international Communism is treated by Merson as self-evident. On the horizon the Soviet Union spreads a comforting glow: the first workers' state, the natural focus of internationalism for proletarians undeceived by social democratic reforms or uncorrupted by the racist chauvinism of the Third Reich. That the 12 years of Hitler's rule were contemporaneous with massive purges, terror and hardening dictatorship within the USSR one would never guess. The German emigrés, including Communists, who disappeared in the Soviet Union after the Nazi-Soviet Pact, pass unnoticed. Stalin is mentioned, rather discreetly, on only three occasions.

Merson has no difficulty in justifying the Pact (which he calls a 'diplomatic revolution'), though it did, he concedes, produce a situation 'full of contradictions' and fostered a KPD line which 'later' became 'a source of embarrassment'. Among these euphemisms one does not discover that Walter Ulbricht published an article in *Die Welt*, on 9 February 1940, denouncing British imperialism for refusing Hitler's peace offer and for plotting to harness Germany as a workshop for a war against the Soviet Union. The silencing of anti-Nazi propaganda in the USSR also lies outside Merson's line of vision.

It can come as little surprise that the Nazi war machine had little to fear from German Communism until Hitler invaded the USSR in June 1941. (This event apparently transformed the war from a 'struggle of rival imperialisms' into one of 'national defence and liberation of enslaved peoples from fascism' — as if the workers of France, Britain and Czechoslovakia had no viable institutions or valuable liberties to defend.) But even after 1941 the evidence of Communist resistance inside Germany is sparse — though Merson has an interesting page on the Jewish 'Baum Group' and indicates that the more progressive army conspirators of 1944, led by Colonel Stauffenberg, were in contact with Communists before their plot was blown.

The defeat and retreat of the German armies brought about no popular uprising, no partisan movement, no Spartacist revolt, nothing of the spirit of 1918-19. The German Communists can hardly be blamed. The Communist partisan movements of occupied Europe derived their strength from the equation of socialism with national liberation. In any case the kind of 'revolution' Stalin wanted in the future Soviet sphere of influence was the sort that later transformed Eastern Europe into Popular Democracies. □

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The new look

Jeremy Black

English Society 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime
JONATHAN CLARK *Cambridge* £30 & £10.95

IT IS NOT EASY to make a reputation as a revisionist. Most arguments have been advanced in the past; the scholars of old, and their contemporary counterparts, were rarely as stupid or simple as their modern detractors would suggest. Revisionists often state the obvious. Alternatively when they have something new to say they find that somebody else has got into print first.

With commendable honesty Jonathan Clark, in the Afterword of his new book, notes how some of his arguments have been discussed by several works published after he finished writing his own. Both John Cannon, in his *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth-Century England*, and Ian Christie, in his *Stress and Stability in Late Eighteenth Century Britain: Reflections on the British Avoidance of Revolution*, emphasised the strength and stability of 18th-century British society and explored the way in which political, ideological and social structures, institutions and practices rested far more on popular support than it had been customary to argue. In simple terms, Cannon and Christie suggested a consent rather than a coercion model for 18th-century Britain, an argument that fits well with the comparable recent trend in the discussion of many early-modern European societies.

Jonathan Clark has arrived independently at the same conclusions, but his powerful new work is more than a simple reiteration of the themes of these scholars. For several reasons Clark's book will command attention. Most significant is his stress on religion. Modern Western historians, bred essentially in a secular tradition, are only too keen to deny religion any autonomous role in history. If it can't be written off as an obvious product of socio-economic interests, it can at least be chucked away in European international affairs after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, in British politics after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. In such an analysis later signs of religious tension, such as the Gordon Riots, are treated as eccentric curiosities. This approach is typical of the teleological, progressive view of British and European history between the mid-17th-century crisis and the French Revolution.

Secular prejudices make it difficult to explain the resilience of the European *ancien regime*. They are firmly dismissed in Clark's study. The essential argument of the book is that *ancien regime* England was a Church-State in which the ideological formulations of society, and in particular deference and popular Anglicanism, go far towards explaining the strength of the system. Clark argues that the principal opposition to the monarchical, aristrocratic, Anglican regime came not from political radicals, whom he treats as a small and inconsequential group, but from religious radicals, in particular Unitarians. He claims that the collapse of the Anglican-aristocratic Establishment in the early-19th century was in no way inevitable, was resisted with vigour and owed much to the failure to protect the position of the Church of England. In 1828 Lord Holland argued that Catholic Emancipation would have enormous effects 'as it explodes the real Tory doctrine that *Church and State are indivisible*'. Clark sees as crucial the capitulation to the demands for Emancipation and of Protestant Dissenters.

In many senses his discussion of the last 30 years of his period is the most interesting in the book. Parliamentary reform is presented as a minor issue, clearly subordinate to interest in religious changes and itself 'a consequence of the shattering of the old order by Emancipation'. The collapse of the Church-State is viewed largely as a result of political manoeuvre and, in particular, of 'a final and sudden betrayal from within'. By presenting the period 1828-1832 not as number of piecemeal adjustments but as a fundamental discontinuity in principles and values, Clark argues that it is necessary to reassess the nature of the Victorian system. He sees the English élite and the Anglican Church after 1832 fighting for survival within a plural society. The House of Lords is seen as no longer dominant and the political system is presented as containing an inbuilt populist bias.

Clark's perspective throws new light on many old problems and brings to prominence several aspects of his period that have received very little attention. There are fascinating discussions of a rich variety of issues ranging from public tolerance of duelling to the thought of Edmund Burke, the persistence of divine right theory and providentialism to the conservative political theology of Methodism and Evangelicalism. Clark's approach is throughout provocative and stimulating. Many will disagree with him, and he will no doubt welcome that, for alongside Clark as scholar one can clearly sense Clark as controversialist, relishing a debate over methodological and historiographical assumptions.

For too long the 18th century has suffered a relative lack of historical attention, particularly in comparison with neighbouring centuries. It is time for a new approach. Students are bored with the causes of the Civil War: the early 17th century, for long the dominant concern of historical attention in early modern Britain, is now a historiographical rut. Hopefully Clark's work, which CUP has brought out in an attractive paperback edition as well as in hardback, will inspire fresh research and new perspectives. Many will disagree with it, but no one should regret that such an intelligent, stimulating panoramic view has been presented. This is an exciting book, and it is time for a change. □

Winter borscht

Carol Rumens

Don't look for spies or angels in our kitchen;
We're Christmassing far from all religions.
Utopia doesn't mean a thing to us,
And we've forgotten how to talk with children.

Eating, though, continues. And ever since
I dipped my spoon into this wavy, scarlet
Winter sun, lifted its cap of beet-leaves,
I've felt as festive as a wedding-taxi

Climbing in clouds of exhaust and frost and ribbons,
With a bride who'll simply giggle and take snaps
— The sandy, pointed beard, implacably growthless
Under its arc-light, needn't expect a visit.

Then, of course, back to the revolution,
The uneatable sundae casting turd-like shadows,
And not enough spoons, and too many elbows.
Finding myself in such an official portrait

I think about God again, and the chutzpah of those
(Christians) who made their text-book so alive,
You could hear the jostle of wings, the musical pings
Of the haloes all the way from Florence to Kiev.

They too loved red. In fact, their rosy seraphs
Were here before us, bowed towards our plates.
Look, they've left us both a faint, indelible,
Golden sign, a blood-stained halo-print.

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Shorter reviews

In Dora's Case: Freud — Hysteria — Feminism

ed. CHARLES BERNHEIMER and CLAIRE KAHANE
Virago £11.95 & £5.95

'Dora' — alias Ida Bauer — was one of Freud's most fascinating, enigmatic patients. Her mother suffered from 'housewife's psychosis' (Freud's definition), an obsession with washing and cleaning, and her father indulged in clandestine sexual activities.

Steven Marcus sees Dora's case history as 'a classical Victorian domestic drama that is at the same time a sexual and emotional can of worms', a tale of adult conspiracy, collusion and concealment. Marcus is a contributor to this series of thought-provoking essays incorporating a broad spectrum of views about the mind and motivations of this highly complex young woman.

Most, sadly, are swathed in the dense, convoluted style of analyst and academic, an esoteric, theoretical jargon which detracts from, rather than enhances, the layperson's understanding of the matter. Marcus is a welcome exception. So, too, is Maria Ramas, whose sharply attuned feminist insights into Dora's condition ('Freud's Dora, Dora's Hysteria') are expressed clearly and unambiguously.

Toril Moi is equally perspicacious. She develops and fleshes out the feminist polemics of the case, considering every facet of Dora's social background and making telling connections between Dora's psychological problems and her claustrophobic family situation. She regards Dora as a victim of the male power game. 'She believes (and Freud agrees) that she is being used as a pawn in a game between her father and Herr K, the husband of her father's mistress.'

Moi explores Freud's role in the case: his countertransference (a crucial factor) and his self-confessed failure to 'cure' Dora, a consequence (claims Moi) of his own inherent sexism: 'Freud the liberator happens also to be, objectively, on the side of oppression. He is a male in patriarchal society . . . an educated bourgeois male.' Freud's 'patriarchal prejudices' blind him to Dora's possible lesbian tendencies. He 'systematically refuses to consider female sexuality as an active, independent drive', choosing instead to see Dora as an object of male gratification.

As Madelon Sprengnether points out, bisexuality and homosexuality are mere 'asides' to Freud's main argument, which is imbued with the notion that rabid heterosexuality is the norm and all else is at best peripheral, irrelevant and, at worst, a deviation. These enlightened interpretations help to counterbalance Freud's 'phallocentric' thinking.

Veronica Groocock

Going Critical

WALTER C. PATTERSON *Paladin* £2.95

The British nuclear industry breaks all records for rewarding incompetence. The theme of Patterson's unofficial history of the British atom is that the major decisions of almost 40 years have been wrong pretty well without exception, but the show — and the players — stay resolutely on the road. Nuclear fuel is reprocessed for no economic or logical reason, giving rise to Sellafield, the bad news capital of Britain. Billions go into fast reactor development, with no practical yield. And the choice of conventional reactors is bodged time and time again. But no government has the nerve to announce that it has all been a dreadful mistake and the money would be better spent elsewhere.

The one area where Patterson does not claim the nuclear industry lacks competence is political access. It has always been smiled upon by successive governments and rarely if ever been denied funds or permission to spend them. In the future, a lengthy programme of pressurised water reactors, more plant for producing and handling nuclear waste and a stake in a European fast reactor work are the likeliest directions for the industry, despite the problems of showing that any of this is worthwhile.

For Patterson, the nuclear industry is pursuing a 'futile chimera' and the perpetrators of this uniquely expensive pastime should be brought to book. In practice, even some Conservative MPs can now be found who doubt the nuclear industry's elaborate claims.

The problem is that the assumption that nuclear power is a good thing is embedded deeply in the official British mind — mere argument has little hope of prevailing. Patterson's work is among the best antidotes to this pernicious disease.

Martin Ince

Blindfold Games

ALAN ROSS *Collins/Harvill* £12.95

In *Blindfold Games*, Alan Ross has produced a compellingly vivid account of his first 24 years — childhood in India at the tail-end of the Raj; schooling in Sussex (responsible for his life-long love of cricket), followed by Oxford where he won Blues for both cricket and squash; the first excitement of poetry; and then five years in the Royal Navy. The temptation to envy this privileged up-bringing is scotched by those years of convoy duty in the North Sea and beyond.

At an age when the worst he might have expected should have been a duck at Lord's or a hostile viva, Alan Ross found himself entombed in the for'ard part of a stricken destroyer, supposedly fire-fighting, with only the bobbing corpses of two gun crews for company. Thousands of seamen must have lost their lives in similarly abject circumstances.

Ross was lucky. Someone remembered he was there and got him out. The rest of his war was more peaceful, and in 1946 he ended up in Germany, helping to supervise a camp for German officers. His bridge partner was a racketeer who had already murdered his mother and went on to dispose of his wife and mother-in-law.

Highly readable though all this is, the book is 'only incidentally an autobiography', the intention being to show 'the raw material out of which I began to write poetry'. 'War, India, cricket' are Ross's subjects, and poems on all three are packaged between the chapters of prose. The cricket (and indeed football) poems have such alluring titles as 'A Photograph of Hammond', 'Watching Benaud Bowl', 'Cricket at Oxford', but don't always fulfill their promise. Alan Ross's determination to translate an 'aesthetic' experience of sport into art hits a fundamental snag: action is not really susceptible to lyric description. A breezily evocative line like 'Watching cricket at Brighton, Tate bowling through sea-scented air', is worth all 50 or so of 'Stanley Matthews', with its obsessive detail and pretentious images drawn from classical music, bull-fighting, painting, etc.

Though the prose account of the Battle of the Barents Sea is more effective than the long narrative poem 'JW51B', many of the shorter war poems succeed in capturing the boredom, fear, fatigue and occasional excitement of active — or inactive — service. With Charles Causley, Alan Ross must be the leading poet of the war at sea.

Simon Rae

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THE STORIES in **Back in the World** are better and more expansive than those in Wolff's impressive but uneven first collection, *Hunters in the Snow*. With this new volume he rivals Raymond Carver as the finest male short-story writer now working in America — so let's start by distinguishing him from Carver. There is an ever-present prospect of disappointment in Carver, a compulsive dreariness; Wolff deals with similar material but he is more flexible and urbane. His touch is lighter, his stories free of the imaginative over-determinism of Carver: they are *mystery* stories, full of unnoticed omens and turnings not taken.

Wolff's characters never feel quite sure what's happening to them. His stories are about people who don't know how they're going to end. They tend to close with a sense of imminent resolution, the final note is of suspended possibility, an image or line containing all that has gone before: 'dropped seeds of now/becoming then.'*

Here are the closing lines of 'Leviathan' where Helen, after an all-night session, begins to spread out another pile of coke for herself and two friends:

> Mitch and Bliss smiled up at her from the mirror, and Helen smiled back between them. Their faces were rosy with candlelight. They were the faces of three well-wishers, carolers, looking in at Helen through a window filling up with snow.

How *easily* he seems to conjure up that image. No fuss: Wolff's prose is relaxed, delicately inflected — but he has the calm acuity of a forensic scientist who can detect in the smallest gesture the trace of an unspoken intent.

'Friends', exclaims the ageing Leib Goldkorn from the back of a seven-seater Buick crammed with the entire staff of the Steinway Restaurant and its patrons, a corpse and a full-size bass viol, 'would anyone care for a Mint Cream?' Goldkorn — 'Flute graduate, Akademie für Musik, Philosophie, und darstllende Kunst . . . From 1943, a citizen of America. Home delivery subscriber, New York *Herald Tribune*' — is a gorgeous comic creation, swept along with the other members of a quintet from one uproarious crisis to another. Caught in a mix of Jewish, high Viennese and New York street culture the bewildered syntax of his tales is filled with amazed similes and expressions of delight in the perplexing energy of the Lower East Side and the soothing power of music. But the violence of the city and the power of music stir up other, bitter memories of loss, of the rise of Nazism and his escape from Vienna. And this is perhaps the truly remarkable quality of **Goldkorn's Tales**: a gaiety that is also the expression of pathos, an extravagant style that is as appropriate a vehicle for hilarity as it is for anguish — enabling Epstein, in the closing pages, to move from the Keystone Kops scene in the Buick to Goldkorn's staggering, moving memory of a vast silver Zeppelin emerging from thick coils of black cloud in the early years of the century. Extraordinary; I've never read anything quite like it.

The problem with Peter Vansittart's **Aspects of Feeling** is that it is utterly ungripping. Concerned almost entirely with the upper echelons of English society, it follows the lives of five people — Roger and Janet Kirkland and the three children of whom they are guardians: Della, Graham and Bayard — in the four decades following the Second World War. Kirkland becomes involved in a political scandal and the lives of the others are bruised by public disappointment and personal crises; but their actions and relationships are often submerged beneath the flux of Vansittart's labile and elusive language. Characters and action are less strong than the eddies and currents of a restless Durrellian prose ('Another plane of life was beginning, where parallel lines meet') that simultaneously saturates our attention and swirls past it. On every page there are flashing miracles of rhythm and light but all the time the text seems to be demanding a patience that it is incapable of sustaining, that it actively thwarts.

I would be reluctant to convert these responses into judgment: not a bad book but one that I found it impossible to enjoy. I offer no such reservations about **The Prick of Noon** which I mention only because it was in the last *New Statesman* list of forthcoming books. As it is, I would like to fill a bucket of abuse and pour it over De Vries's paltry bit of fiction. Narrator Eddie Teeters makes and does the stunt work in pornographic films which he markets as educational aids. Eventually this activity lands him in court on an obscenity charge but meantime he's in hot pursuit of a number of women — one of whom jerks him off while watching his performance in a film — for strictly private ends. Eddie narrates these skirt-chasing antics in the well-thumbed self-deprecatory I'm-a-rum-'un ironic mode much favoured by comic novelists. Apart from the odd one-liner ('It was mid-July now, and the mercury rose to the occasion.') I was thoroughly depressed by these 200 pages of flabby machismo, feeble titillation and locker room misogyny.

What? Oh, it's a *satire* on those things . . . Ah! Now I understand. □

* *Charles Tomlinson, 'During Rain', Selected Poems OUP*

And still people die of hunger

Aidan Foster-Carter

Global Challenge: From Crisis to Co-operation: Breaking the North-South Stalemate (Report of the Socialist International Committee on Economic Policy, chaired by Michael Manley, President Willy Brandt)
Pan £2.95

WHAT: *another* one? First — in 1980, already — came *North-South: A Programme for Survival*: the report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, better known as 'the Brandt Report' after its distinguished chairperson. Brandt was a surprise best-seller for Pan, confuting the common view that Western audiences deep down aren't really interested in development issues — and this four years before Geldof.

Only nothing much happened. World leaders met at a fancy beach resort in Mexico, uttered platitudes, and that was that. So Brandt and ICIDI tried again, in 1983, with their second report *Common Crisis: North-South Co-operation for World Recovery*. As the crises of debt and famine were added to the already visible problems of recession and trade inequality, the second Brandt report adopted an even more urgent tone than its predecessor. And absolutely nothing whatever happened.

So now we have no.3. Well, not exactly. The ICIDI as such is no more, and 'Brandt III' is openly sponsored by the Socialist International. That's a gain, I think. The earlier Brandts' professed supra-partisanship tended either to weaken their thrust or barely to conceal their quite mainstream (and perfectly partisan) Keynesian and social democratic premises. No such decorousness is now required: this is Brandt with the gloves off, and it packs a much better punch as a result.

Not that the message is much changed. Global Keynesianism still sees the ultimate solution in 'social accumulation'. Helping the wretched of the earth to translate their palpable needs into economically effective demand can regenerate the world economy, for countries North and South alike. I'm sure that's true, and daily more urgent. The problem, as ever, is one of agency: who will act? and how?

To its credit, *Global Challenge* (like its predecessors) is full of here-and-now practical proposals. Chapter 3 ('Restructuring Trade

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and Finance') is especially impressive, with its trenchant and cogent assault on monetarist and free-market nostrums for their weaknesses as either description or prescription, and the havoc they've wrought in the economies of North and South alike. This hard-edged analytical clarity is sustained almost throughout. Only chapter 4 ('Redistribution and Development') tends to degenerate, disappointingly, into loose lists of everything everyone's in favour of (rural development, women's rights, basic needs, democracy, the environment, etc. etc.) with precious little in the way of pointing to logical linkages and viable sequences. Yes, of course everything is connected to everything else. But in a real world of scarcities, we urgently need to know where most effectively to make a start.

And not only where, but *who*. For the question of agency really won't be ducked. Yet, for all its overwhelming good sense, there is one crucial fence which *Global Challenge* persistently refuses. In the long run, to be sure, we do face a 'common crisis' (and the longer we take to recognise this fact, the shorter I fear that long run may be).

Yet the day-to-day political choices faced by governments (including socialist ones, and especially those responsible to electorates) much more often present themselves as *competitive*: with other countries, or even within countries between one region and another. In a rational world, of *course* agricultural protectionism in the USA and Western Europe would be ended; of course textile imports should be liberalised. But who on earth is going to campaign on such a platform in Iowa, or Rochdale?

Much more likely, therefore — indeed, we are already witnessing it — is the emergence of what David Harvey has dubbed 'regional class alliances'; incorporating geographically based sections of capital, labour and state alike. Dear Nissan, please *don't* go to Liverpool or Immingham — let alone to France or Germany — but come to us, Washington New Town! It's a wretched game, scarcely less so for the solitary victor than the numerous losers. But that's the game dictated by conditions as the 20th century closes. Of course it isn't, and can never be, a socialist game. Yet it's a game that the entire spectrum of the Left does, in fact, feel constrained to join in.

Are there really no alternatives? Alas, *Global Challenge* here offers little beyond pious hopes. If there's to be a 'Brandt IV' — and indeed, why shouldn't this series run and run? — then I hope it will be firmly focused on the *political* tasks and preconditions of effective action by socialists across the boundaries of the economic nationalism which (perhaps inevitably) is increasingly prevalent, not least on the Left. It's good to see Brandt with the gloves off; but better yet would be Brandt with teeth. □

Among this week's contributors:

David Caute's *The Espionage of Saints* is published next week by Hamish Hamilton.

Jeremy Black's *Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the 18th Century* is due out next winter. He is working on another book about the press in the 18th century.

FILMS

You are old, Alice Liddell

John Coleman

'Pedantic, mischievous' Amelia Shankley as one of a complex of Alices in *Dreamchild*

Dreamchild (PG)
Curzon, Mayfair
Death in a French Garden (18)
Chelsea Cinema; Cannon, Tottenham Court Road
Before Stonewall
Metro One; Everyman

IN APRIL 1932, a Mrs Hargreaves sailed for New York to receive an honorary degree from Columbia University. She was in her eightieth year, her maiden name had been Liddell and the occasion was a Stateside celebration of the Lewis Carroll Centenary. Working from this real-life event the trio who made that splendidly bitter-sweet TV film, *Cream in My Coffee* (winner of the Prix Italia) — Gavin Millar, director; Dennis Potter, writer; and Kenith Trodd, producer — with *Pennies from Heaven* Rick McCallum coming in as co-producer, has now created the extraordinary *Dreamchild*, officially Millar's first feature movie and Potter's first script to be written directly for the big screen.

The result is disturbing, entrancing, elegiac, harsh, lyrical, funny, saddening and finally triumphant. Intimations of mortality jostle with Carroll's immortal fantasies. A late lesson in love is culled from long-buried memories of the Reverend Charles Dodgson (Ian Holm). From a bleak, audacious opening one is drawn into a many-faceted experience, where *Alice in Wonderland* and Alice grown old and querulous (Coral Browne) and Alice as a pedantic, mischievous and pretty little Victorian miss (Amelia Shankley) visually — and sometimes with verbal irony — interact, any one upon the others, with subtle and startling effect.

A dark undulation of sea, a lowering sky, a pebbly beach, two craggy rocks, the sound of sobbing and an early brief encounter for Alices young and old with a Mock Turtle and Gryphon (Jim Henson's awesome creatures) that shade more grotesque than Tenniel's, just as later fragments of that Tea-Party offer a Mad Hatter and March Hare of barely qualified menace — 'You stupid, ugly old half-wit hag. You should be dead,' shouts the Hatter to a panic-stricken elderly woman, nightmarishly alone in a New York suite, her put-upon young companion Lucy lured away to tea-dance in the hotel ballroom by thrusting reporter Jack: here be monsters, wonderfully caught in elaborate camera motions, staring close-ups. And the crush of newshawks (with Peter Gallagher's Jack the favoured exception,

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

A Chorus Line Richard Attenborough's valiantly rewarded and rewarding shot at screening the impossible: an audience-participation stage musical. Choreographically updated by Jeffrey Hornaday, it combines exuberant dance, a good song or three, with edgy dialogue. Showbiz loving itself, but for once so what? (Vicki Frederick, Audrey Landers).

Defence of the Realm Fumes of menace rise from David Drury's corrosive if erratic political chiller, written by Martin Stellman, reflecting current home-based concerns. Hoodwinked into disgracing awkward MP, tabloid reporter redemptively opens can of worms as Special Branch hovers (Gabriel Byrne, Denholm Elliott, Greta Scacchi).

Nineteen Nineteen Hugh Brody's subtle, low-key first feature, magnificently played, mounted and edited: brief encounter in 1970 Vienna of ageing ex-patients of Freud — resident White Russian émigré Paul Scofield and naturalised New Yorker Maria Schell — for thorny, maybe therapeutic survivors' duologue deftly conjuring with Time and History.

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flattering the visitor to bits, falling for bullied Lucy) are forms of monster, too, jazzily aghast as the lady primly lectures them on old-world manners. One mutters disgustedly, 'Mrs Hargreaves in Wonderland — it ain't got the same ring, sweetheart,' neatly encapsulating a major thrust of the film. There are moments in the garish big city (a news room, a bar scene between Jack and a girl colleague) where Millar's touch seems to falter, missing the quick crackle and pace of Thirties and Forties movies being sought: on reflection, Potter is the guiltier party here.

But the piece is stunningly organised elsewhere and impeccably played. Holm's stuttering Dodgson, willingly led by the nose by Alice, enduring the careless mockery and random hugs alike, wilting gently under the gaze of Jane Asher's watchful Mrs Liddell as they boat and picnic, gets his reward in a marvellous fantasy finale. His breakdown while reciting 'The Lobster Quadrille' is picked up by a Yankee choral rendering at the packed degree ceremony; Coral Browne brings immense, moving dignity to Mrs Hargreaves's peroration, thanking Mr Dodgson for the love that gave birth to his creations; and young Alice is back by that opening seashore, with the Reverend hunched as Mock Turtle, sorrowing, then peeping slyly from behind his hands as he and his beloved break into laughter, joyously, even the grumpy Gryphon outfaced, and Billy Williams's artful camera withdraws on revelry, in a complete reversal of the beginning, to end on the dark, no longer estranging sea: a reconciliation with the past. Gavin Millar has reason to be proud of this exquisitely crafted cinema debut.

Michel Deville's **Death in a French Garden** shows this prolific director (little of whose work has been seen over here) putting on the stylistic ritz with a vengeance in a Gallic-sophisticated contemporary thriller of eye-catching parts and ear-bending eroticism. I found myself thinking of Peter Greenaway now and then (when objects and tiny incidents of no immediate relevance were getting the treatment): fascinating, therefore, to discover that *The Draughtsman's Contract* was called *Meurtre dans un Jardin Anglais* in France, that Deville's original intention was to title *his* movie *Meurtre dans un Jardin Français* (he ultimately settled for the untranslatably punning *Péril en la Demeure*) and — the wheel of fatuous circumstance coming full circle — we now have his first title as the English one, a Greenaway convolution if ever there was one.

To the accompaniment of a high-class score (Brahms, Schubert, Granados), a rootless youngish man of casual habits — a scruffy mac mostly — is hired to teach guitar to the fetching daughter of a deuced odd couple (Michel Piccoli, Nicole Garcia) living in some splendour in a quiet country town. The wife comes to the teacher's large loft — a solitary egg in the fridge — and matter-of-factly seduces him; a limping mystery woman moves in next door to the couple and summons our willing hero in for scatty chats — the scatological one, about pubic hair, occurs in a bar — and a chance to play an eavesdropping video of his amorous activities with the wife. Who filmed it, how a hired killer saves the hero from a beating-up and why, what happens when husband Piccoli moves in with a knife and lies dead in the shrubbery himself: these and other enigmas are presented with admirable cool, considerable humour and breathtaking jumpcuts on dialogue. *Très chic*, not to say downright cheeky.

Catch the entertaining, informative and thought-provoking archive-and-interview documentary, **Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community**, which has some lively notions and crazy old footage. *Rocky IV* and a couple of other zeroes *may* get their due next week. □

DANCE

No immediate danger

Stephanie Jordan

Janet Smith and Dancers
The Place

LAST WEEK we had Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, which appears to at least one prominent choreographer I know to be the unwelcome artistic product of Thatcher's right little, tight little Britain. Similarly, in the unlikelihood of an Alliance majority in the House of Commons, Janet Smith and Dancers would be elevated to heroic status for services to timidity and indecision.

Though its touring schedule is international, this company is the darling of ageing Home Counties hippies. It starts with the disadvantages of an output and a manner of dancing surprisingly ignorant of the advance made during the last decade in audiences' (at least, British audiences') sophistication and expectations of dance. Where it tackles familiar themes, as in genre pieces to jazz or swing numbers, its versions suffer by comparison with the models. The homegrown choreography is limp and laden with pleasant organic circles and swings and languishing heads and backs.

The American choreographer Dan Wagoner does attempt to draw some rhythm and punch out of this company with his number *Flee as a Bird*.

Here, in what turns out to be the most interesting work of the programme, he operates best at high speed, to various jazz and blues classics. Early on, you realise that he has a quite different company in mind for his work: Smith, for instance, remains a dancer of distinction, but Wagoner's 'Miss Otis Regrets' demonstrates her inability to be anything but mild and withdrawn when she should be visibly impatient and aloof.

The programme has serious as well as comic moments, *Near & From Far* containing both — though the opportunities for laughter offered to the Place audience were largely ignored.

Entirely serious is Gill Clarke's *Chaconne* to Bach's great D minor work for solo violin, here expertly performed on guitar by Colin Downs. In it, a sort of Chattertonian doomed youth is the occasion of much suggested love and intrigue among his companions, all dressed in something approaching Repertory Theatre Tudor.

Smith concludes the evening with her new ballet, *Let's Face the Music*, yet another work to evoke the American era of Prohibition. The decor is attractive — Pam Knight's white-lit tenement windows and fire escapes — and the music is a successful interleaving of Robert Russell Bennett's astringent chamber jazz *Hexapoda* with Irving Berlin songs from the period.

But, because of an overpowering lack of commitment to the played-out theme, neither the jokes nor the personal tragedies of its flimsily drawn characters (the statutory 'I'm drunk', 'I'm worn out', 'I'm miserable') mean much. We are finally urged, 'Let's face the music,' when the latter has produced the impact of a shoplifting incident in Southgate.

If Smith's well-meaning intention is to spare us the 'dangers' of new dance, her work offers little consolation. If it's food for the soul, it's a mere cottage cheese salad. □

MUSIC

Old bulrushes

Andrew Clements

Moses
Coliseum

THE SPONSORSHIP deal that English National Opera worked out with Norwest Holst has been one of the more imaginative ways of encouraging new productions. Funding was made available specifically for three low-budget stagings of neglected operas, each designed for a single extended run and then to be discarded. Rossini's *Rienzi* and Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* in previous seasons. Of the trio *Moses* has the most intrinsic musical worth; it is as good as anything Rossini produced in the genre of *opera seria* and its relative obscurity is due much more to the immobility of the plot than the unevenness of the music.

The previous producers of these disposable stagings made a virtue of their lack of resources. Nicholas Hytner's translation of *Rienzi* to Fascist Italy was brilliantly conceived and carried through, whether or not one thought the idea theatrically justified; David Alden placed *Mazeppa* in Stalinist Russia and, even if he overdid the gore, still came up with something that was consistently watchable and coherent. In both cases the minimum of scenery and austere costuming concentrated the action upon the characters themselves with unusual intensity; it gave both operas a memorability that belied their structural weakness.

Now, though, we have a reasonably strong

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opera and an utterly inept production. Keith Warner appears to have based his *Moses* upon a collection of hand-me-downs from its predecessors: the action (surprise, surprise) is set in the present, with the Israelites a revolutionary cult held captive by a dictatorial regime; Moses is part religious leader, part revolutionary, his followers wear tattered battle dress over their everyday clothes to conduct their religious rituals. There is a good deal of brutality and gratuitous violence — when the Israelites are exiled in chains at the end of Act 3 each of them is branded with a hot iron; rather than being allowed to drown in the Red Sea, Pharoah and his family are tied to a post and shot at close range — and none of it does anything to enhance or further the action. There is not a spark of originality in the handling of the chorus scenes, or in the confrontations between Moses and Pharoah. Had someone been asked to invent a parody of a 1980s production of *Moses* it would not have differed much from this.

Had the whole show been better sung, acted and conducted ENO might just have got away with it and been praised for reviving yet another forgotten masterpiece. But, a few isolated moments apart, the evening plods along, conducted without any spirit or power by the veteran Alberto Erede, who fails to rouse the chorus to anything near its best form. As Moses John Tomlinson is imposing and believable, but he has sung a good deal better than he managed on the opening night; as his nephew Eleazor Alan Woodrow is hopelessly handicapped by a ridiculous costume and some awkward stage business.

Cathryn Pope is often out of her depth as Anna, lacking the projection and power for many of her lines, but singing quite touchingly in the third act when forced to choose between Israel and Pharaoh's son whom she loves. Jane Eaglen is slightly rough but at least an adequately powered Sinaida, Pharoah's wife; both Pharoah (Neil Howlett) and his son Amenophis (Glenn Winslade) give adequate accounts of themselves, but that anyone at all in the cast could sing without cringing in embarrassment is an achievement in itself. The whole production, so patently designed to be controversial, raises at least one genuine point for dispute: is it the worst new production ever seen at ENO? For my money, it is, but others with longer memories claim to have seen worse. I find that hard to believe. □

THEATRE: 1

Home truth

Benedict Nightingale

Ourselves Alone
ANNE DEVLIN *Theatre Upstairs*

ONE OF THE commonplaces of Irish drama — see O'Casey, *passim* — is that, directly or indirectly, it's the women who mainly suffer the effects of the intransigent convictions of the men. Another is that the patriots, the ideologues, the battlers for big, fine causes will never be able fully to assimilate or finally to eradicate individual quiddity, quirk or bloody-mindedness, and that this is at least as much a reason for rejoicing as regret.

Both ideas are somewhere at or near the core of *Ourselves Alone*, a play that eluded me on its first visit to the Theatre Upstairs but has now made a much-merited return, proving (as it vividly does) that talent and passion can transform the old into the new, received wisdom into timely insight.

I don't know whether Anne Devlin writes from experience as well as sympathetic imagination, but she certainly leaves one feeling that she could and should be more specific and forthright when she describes herself in the programme as coming 'from Belfast'. We're in the company, surely, of someone painfully familiar with the hard heart of republican Andersontown, a place in which what ought to be abnormal is taken entirely for granted. Of course the son of the family will be in Long Kesh or, if out, once more on the run. Of course his friends and relations will be stockpiling arms in readiness for the eventual civil war with the Prots. Of course the noise of dustbin lids will recurrently be heard clanging up from the street, followed by a hammering on the door and a bevy of heavily-armed English soldiers insolently ensconced in the living room. That's the way life has been for years and years and years.

But precisely who are the oppressors and the oppressed? Without permitting her play to become in any sense an apologia for the occupying Brits — one is much more struck by the intimate treacheries of the mole who burrows into this IRA stronghold than by his undoubted pluck — she asks some unsettling questions of those resisting them. The men have become sour, baleful, in some cases tyrannical. When the paterfamilias visits his daughters, they're almost as anxious to hide their cigarettes and wine as their political doubts. His reaction to the girl who is more interested in evolving a singing career than dedicating herself to Irish history is unalloyed rejection and contempt. His orders to her sister, who has been unwise enough to become pregnant by the English infiltrator, are equally blunt and brutal: abort the baby. A grim male puritanism rules and, Devlin rather daringly suggests, would no doubt continue to rule if its political objects were achieved.

'There are no personal reasons, only political ones'; 'There are no differences between one person and another that are not political'. Again and again much the same bleak claim is made and, again and again, the human evidence makes it look insufficient, if not worse. Even the shadowy gentleman who leads the local provos seems to be perpetually and forlornly in emotional transit between the wife who has born him ten children in as many years and Josie, his courier and comrade-in-arms. As for Josie herself, she renounces him in angry disillusion, convinces herself on inadequate evidence that a pukka Englishman is actually a romantic Irish patriot and launches into her calamitous affair with him. Meanwhile, her brother is celebrating his release from prison by destroying her sister-in-law, and her younger sister, Frieda, is packing her bags for England, having failed to find bliss with the earnest young Marxist to whom she's fled in frustration and resentment from her importunate family. These people are thrown into confusion by the personal, mutilated by the political and, whatever their rhetoric, utterly unable to get the two in sync.

What to conclude from all this? Anne Devlin, I suspect, is with Josie when she confides that she no longer believes in the possibility of creating a 32-county workers' state, right though the aim may be. But she's even more sympathetic with Frieda when she wonders if the likes of her would enjoy a more fulfilled and dignified life in a united Ireland brought into being by the likes of either her father or the martyr Bobby Sands, whose wife

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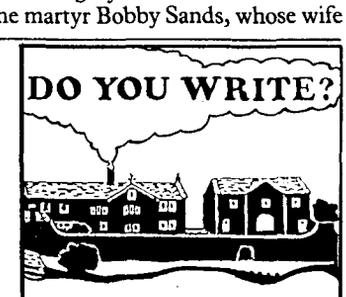
DOMINION THEATRE 01-580 9562/3. 29 January, 7.30pm. **CONTEMPORARY MUSIC NETWORK CONCERT/STEVE REICH AND MUSICIANS.** Tickets also available from Bloomsbury Theatre 01-387 9629.



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was reputedly so scared by his violence she felt safe visiting him only when he was dead. Indeed, the biog. in the programme suggests that Devlin has followed the younger sister's example and simply opted out of the whole enervating mess by moving to Birmingham. The disenchantment, the weariness, the pessimism, the sheer boredom implicit in this won't of course meet with universal approval; but one feels it has the authority of a dispatch from the front lines.

Indeed, one might go further, thanks to the immediacy of Simon Curtis's production and the freshness of a cast including Adrian Dunbar, Hilary Reynolds and, marooned between commitment and despair, the impressive Brid Brennan. In its steady, balanced, unpolemical way, Devlin's play is as damaging a critique of the provisional end of the republican movement as I've seen. After all, would *you* want to live in a utopia built by people in the business, not just of smashing bodies, but of crushing souls — their own and those of the people closest to them? □

THEATRE: 2

Heroes at bay

Julia Pascal

Theatre in Israel isn't an élitist social outing, but a forum for political debate

THE PALESTINIAN is currently one of the most controversial plays showing in Israel. The title itself caused protest even before the first night and an alternative, *Shooting Magda*, was offered by its author Yehoshuah Sobol.

Sobol is one of the country's leading playwrights, his work referring not only to Israel but to the recent European experience. His *Soul of a Jew*, a portrait of the antiSemitic Viennese Jew Otto Weininge, caused controversy both in Israel and when it came to the Edinburgh Festival and to Riverside Studios in 1984.

Shooting Magda is a Pirandellian work which explores notions of identity in art and in 'real life', for Israeli Arabs and Jews. Magda of the title is 'being shot' by TV cameras who are filming her story. But Magda is merely a character based on a 'real' character in the play, an Arab woman called Samira, and Samira wants her TV persona, Magda, to be played by a Jewish actress. A dispute starts. How does a Jew play an Arab? What is art and what is life in this context? This is only one strand in a multi-layered play which questions Israeli/Arab identity on the eve of Independence.

Talking to Sobol I learnt of even more complexities: Salwa Nakara Haddad, who plays Samira, had to come to terms with the fact that her family did not like her portraying a 'sexually promiscuous' Arab woman.

The really contentious ingredient of Sobol's play is its critique of Israel as a land of heroes. Sobol is taking the issue on from a strong position of renown within the country, but younger authors in their thirties, like Motti Lerner, are also exploring this provocative theme. Lerner's latest play, *Kasztner*, is about the Hungarian Jew of the title who allegedly 'did deals' with Eichmann in return for the lives of some Hungarian Jews (and was, in fact, assassinated in Israel in 1953). Lerner's play is, according to him, 'about a hero who talks to the devil. Of course those watching the play make contemporary associations. Should we talk to the PLO? Are they our "devil" now? Is it valid to make deals in order to preserve life?' Lerner's play has caused much press comment and he makes a sound point: 'Israel has been writing about the The Israeli As Soldier Hero since the beginning of the state, but I'm saying let's examine our propensity for hero worship. Only now, 18 years after occupation, is the country confronting The Israeli As Occupier.'

The shock for a visitor who is used to English theatre's obsession with safe revivals and musicals is how Israeli theatre directly reflects the disputes of the street. This is not fringe theatre, as it would be in London, but heavily state-subsidised and massively attended. Israel has the highest audience figures in the world and there are strong ties with the unions. Theatres make contracts with industry, banks, hospitals — each of which can bring about 40,000 workers to a production, thus guaranteeing an audience. Ten-pound tickets are then bought by the workers for £2.50, while the rest (minus a party reduction) is paid for by the union. The same scheme is used with schools. The controversial nature of current self-examination thus filters throughout all areas of the community.

If Israel's theatre is the public platform for left-wing debate, what is the opposition to it? Censorship, which offers protection to 'public sensitivities', is a hangover from the British Mandate and, so far, only three plays have been censored since 1948 (one for causing offence to Christians). More relevantly, the Marxist playwright Yitzhak Laor was last year asked to write a play for Haifa Theatre. His *Ephraim Returns to the Army* is an attack on the Israeli Defence Force and, in September, it was censored by the Interior Ministry's 20-member board. As playwright and co-Artistic Director of the Haifa Theatre, Sobol threatened to resign if the censors refused to reconsider their decision. They complied — and endorsed their ban.

At the end of December, the head of Tel Aviv's University Theatre Department, Dr Avi Oz, offered a playreading of Laor's play: there was uproarious debate. As the play suggested that soldiers torture Arabs and pass their time in sex and playing chess, one Israeli shouted from the floor: 'I spent seven years in the army and it wasn't like that!' A professor of philosophy yelled back, 'The censors would ban a reading of Ecclesiastes if it were staged.' With its strong connections to Talmudic debate and to Marx, Israeli theatre is focused on argument, counter-argument and self-examination — and compared to much English theatre is starting to look in the best of health. □

Julia Pascal is the director of Traitors *by Melanie Phillips: at the Drill Hall, London, to 1 February.*

Way to go!

Huw Richards

'WE WANT a school our football team can be proud of,' once announced an official from the University of Oklahoma — shedding considerable light on that state. It may have inspired the musical and *Grapes of Wrath*, and given the world the debatable benefits of oil, Jeane Kirkpatrick and the Penn Square Bank crash, but it has no greater source of pride than its college football.

Pro football's franchise system means that anyone could share the fate of the Baltimore Colts fans, who woke up last year to find that their team had decamped to Indianapolis. College teams can't do that. They have the same role as a focus for local pride and identity as soccer clubs had in the British cities that developed out of the Industrial Revolution. So, when Tulsa University's Golden Hurricane — graphically anthropomorphised as something looking like an angry potato — played Long Beach 49ers, it was an irresistible attraction to this Channel-Four-watching visitor to Tulsa.

While neither side is near the top 20, they still have extensive and expensive football programmes. Tulsa employs 12 coaches and its squad contains just about every race and colour (one past football hero had the gloriously melting-pot name of Ishmael Pilkington).

As they charged *en masse* onto the Skelly Stadium pitch, some appeared to have left not only a coathanger but an entire wardrobe inside their shirt, adding an extra dimension to the description 'a big man on campus'. 'Everyone up for kick-off,' the public-address system bellowed and the 12,500-strong crowd rose as if for a national anthem. Tulsa kicked off down the slope — the astroturf pitch, which gleamed bright green under the floodlights, is sharply cambered; how the soccer-playing Tulsa Roughnecks coped with it is a mystery — and then the crowd resumed its seats.

Most eyes focused on the quarterbacks: chief on-field directors and executors of moves. Unlike the pro quarterbacks, they do a great deal of running with the ball. Where soccer reports focus on scorers, their counterparts here also focus on the quarterbacks. Four touchdowns for Long Beach's Martin Sartin (sic) don't rate a mention in the *Tulsa Tribune* against Doug Gaynor's 14 second-half pass completions.

Everything happens extremely quickly. On rushing plays, where one man carries the ball forward, so many team-mates are blocking tackles or making decoy runs that, from the sideline, it's hard to see who's got possession. The game consists of furious bursts of activity followed by pauses with the clock stopped, players trooping on and off and discussing the next play. But, as at party political conferences, there's plenty of extraneous activity to divert spectators.

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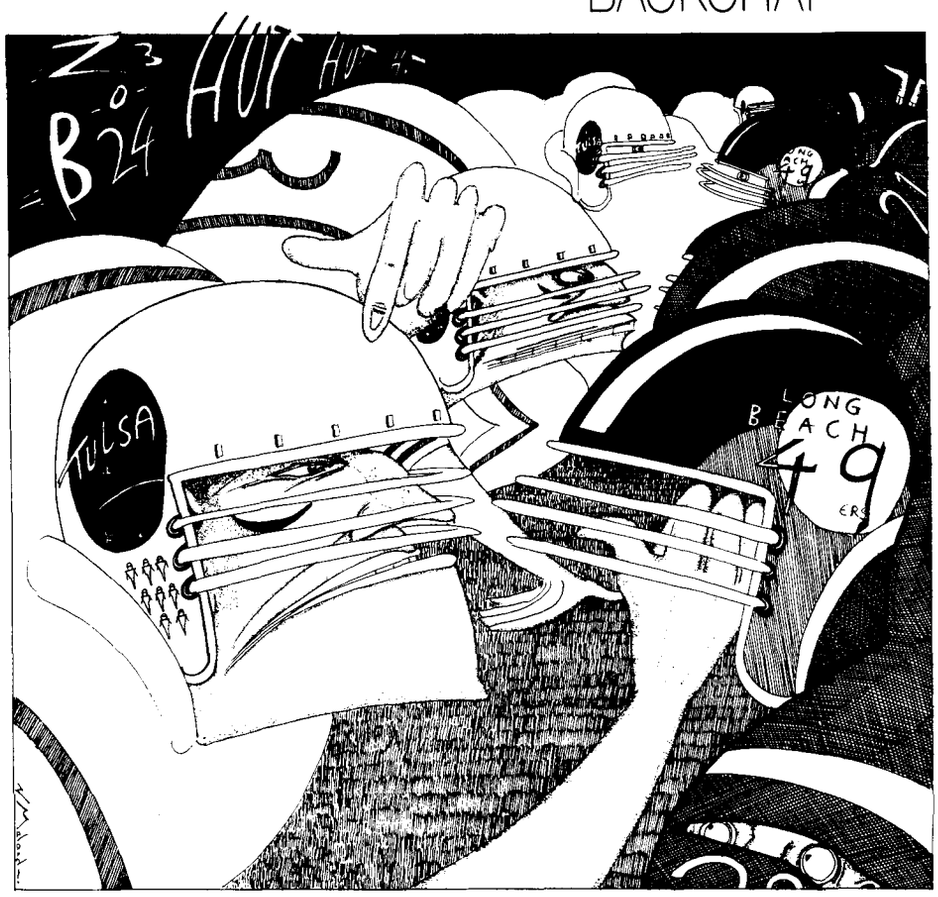

Nick Maland

Two groups of cheerleaders, moving to a different part of the field for each quarter, performed oddly *ad hoc* and unchoreographed routines. The electric scoreboard was a hive of activity, flashing up computer graphics for game situations, comments on play ('Brilliant', 'Aww Right'), adverts and competitions: 'This week's lucky programme number 1089 wins the owner dinner for four at Ken's Pizza.' Whenever a touchdown was scored, it flashed 'Touchdown', with a graphic representation of the action.

When Tulsa crossed for six points, it was almost lost in the pandemonium. As players and coaches exulted, a gun was fired, the band struck up and the cheerleaders pranced. A man in front blew on his bullhorn. But the *pièce de resistance* was the ambulance: Tulsa scores were greeted by a howling siren and lights flashing on and off in time with the band.

There were 24 points from Tulsa to 14 by Long Beach in the first half — much as predicted. 'Hurricane offense is no Miner problem for 49ers' gloated the scoreboard. But Long Beach fought their way back after the interval. Quarterback Doug Gaynor had been persistently mugged by Tulsa defenders in the first half, but now got time and space to show why he's tipped for a pro career.

Considering the ferocious physical contact, there was little fighting. When Tulsa centre Stan Fields, reputed to be the strongest man in Tulsa, a possible future pro and a maths scholar, deployed his strength in an apparent attempt to remove his opposite number's helmet without checking whether his head was still inside, the crowd showed surprised amusement.

The spectators were pretty peaceful too (though this can't be credited to the stadium alcohol ban; by all accounts, plentiful supplies of bourbon and whisky get into the ground in containers with soft-drink labels). After Tulsa Cable distributed frisbees and one patron slung his onto the pitch, he was rapidly ushered out by the police, to loud crowd and stadium announcer approval.

The major violence committed is against the English language. When a Tulsa player fell over his own feet, one fan commented, 'I guess you could call that a self-tackleisation situation.' And people really do say 'Way to go!'

Long Beach belied predictions that they'd be cannon fodder by taking a one-point lead in the last few minutes, 35-34.

When Tulsa lost possession with just over a minute to go, all looked lost. 'Get the ball y'all,' commanded the scoreboard — but the worst high-school team in Oklahoma could have run the clock out in this position. People started to leave.

Then, somehow, Long Beach fouled up and, with 17 seconds left, Tulsa regained possession almost on their own line. Tulsa quarterback Steve Gage made a 50-yard pass down the left-hand side, leaving kicker Jason Staurovsky with a 46-yard goal attempt for the last kick of the match. Elected Tulsa's most popular player in 1984, Staurovsky did wonders for his chances of a 1985 repeat by landing the kick with the cool confidence of a Dusty Hare.

'We win!' exulted the scoreboard, while the Tulsa players formed a delirious pile-up in the centre of the pitch. Long Beach trooped off disbelievingly and were still pretty subdued several hours later in the Marriott Hotel bar. Only the people who'd left early were more depressed. Next morning the *Tulsa Tribune* rose to the occasion: 'A miracle happened last night on 11th Street.' □

WORK IN PROGRESS

Naseem Khan
Molodrama

A MINING VILLAGE in Yorkshire, six miles from the Selby coalfield; a play, in the social centre, that follows the progress of the strike. To what expectations does all that give rise? Not furry animals, I'll bet, or epic battles between moles and guinea pigs with a wicked witch directing the show. The strike has stimulated a fairly large amount of creative work, but none as unexpected and unusual as this mini-pantomime, *Margarella, The Moles and The Money Tree*, or the book (of the same name) on which it's based (see Work in Progress *NS* 4.10.85). For the next two months you'll be able to see it touring miners' lodges, Labour Party clubs and community centres: wherever, say the group, 25 square yards of floor space and an audience are available and whenever members of their ad hoc, non-professional group are free.

Actually, 25 square yards would be a luxury compared with what they got at Sherburn, where they played last week. There's not much to Sherburn, a rural Tory agricultural village till the opening of the rich Selby coalfield: a few shops, a chippie and the single-storey red-brick social club, one of those ugly beleaguered-looking buildings sitting squatly in the midst of acres of bleak, dark car park. The stage inside is a joke, like a little curved shelf at the end of a big room backed by absurdly ruched gold satin curtains. Not exactly the sort of space in which to play a musical with a cast of 18. Now Rotherham Assembly Rooms, where they'd done their first gig — audience of 400, collection of £700 for sacked miners — now there was a space . . .

The spirit that survived the strike isn't going to be defeated by a little shelf, however. This is a go-anywhere, play-anywhere show. The director, the redoubtable Rachel van Riel, supervises a quick bit of replotting and replanning, though some things can't be completely overcome. The one central back entrance, for instance, with a tiny length of corridor behind for wings and dressing-rooms, means breaks between each scene as actors manoeuvre their way carefully on and off. But it is all accomplished in a spirit of great good will and tolerance. Here we are, scene one, with a load of moles — moles, femoles and little moles — sitting on the ground chatting, and you could hardly tell that, if one of them sneezed, several of them would have fallen off.

As all the best plays about disaster do, *Margarella* begins with harmony. The moles reminisce cosily about mole history and their pleasant way of life — but Scartha, the red squirrel, rings warning bells. Dirty business, he's heard, is afoot. He tells them that Margarella, the wicked witch, is up to no good: their molefields are threatened. And, indeed, so it proves, in the next scene in Margarella's

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cave, where this nasty female — in a long, black gown covered with money symbols and a floppy Tory-blue bow — sits plotting. Behind her is her Cabinet, in the drawers of which live her minions and spells and from which she summons Weaseltine, Minion of the Fence (a wild-looking fellow with his hat topped by helicopter blades); McGrey, a dozy Yank with his head permanently in a paper bag; Lion (Brittan), minion of roar and order, with his tough band of guinea pigs (on come the moles again with different hats and rolling-pin truncheons).

How Margarella ejects the moles from Cotton Wood and what happens at Oak Grove will hold few surprises, but the ending belongs more to the realms of wishful thinking. Margarella's money trees, for which she's annexed the molefields, turn out to be nuclear war-heads. The moles and allies rise in righteous anger — 'Margarella,' cries Scartha in those familiar tub-thumping tones, tipping his red baseball cap back, 'Margarella, come out and answer for your lies and your evil!' And she crumbles and vanishes. (Would that things were so easy.) 'Don't fence me in,' sing the animals in triumph. 'I'd rather be a mole than lie to millions.'

Drawing largely on the Brammahs' book (except for songs), it's a witty, modest piece of 45 minutes, full of neat jokes for the knowing. None of the cast is professional. Scartha (Ken Capstick) is a miner and Yorkshire NUM official in real life, his co-mole Dave Jeffrey works for ASTMS. Margarella is a teacher, while several of the other women (including Scargill's ex-secretary) are active members of the continuing women's support groups. They'd come together on the initiative of Yorkshire Arts Circus who originally published the book* ('The most ideologically correct children's book about the strike' — *Sheffield Telegraph*).

It could easily have been terrible. The Brammah book doesn't transfer with great ease to the stage. For, though the basic oppositions are the simple (archetypal) ones of good versus evil, the detail is elaborate, bookish and witty. The book is full of sly jokes that nip you as you've almost passed them (Money Tree-ists and Acornomists live in the bottom of the Cabinet; the sound of dripping denotes the presence of Ping, Hamster Heath and others), and so are the vigorous drawings. On stage, they rush by, here and gone.

All the more credit then to *Margarella*'s cast. They had none of the conventional things like costumes, lights or sets to help them, and little experience on which to fall back. Even their songs had to be unaccompanied. Despite all that, they put over the Brammah brothers' allegory with vigour and a pleasantly direct simplicity. Best of all was that special sense of team-work that not only quietly underlined the point of the play, but also was the thing that kept the cast securely on the mini stage. It gave a new dimension to the phrase 'sticking together'. □

* Margarella, The Moles and The Money Tree *by Frank and Allan Brammah, obtainable from Yorkshire Arts Circus, 17 Linden Terrace, Pontefract (£4.50 incl. p. & p.).*

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams
Mad?

I ONCE WATCHED, with one eye closed, an eye surgeon performing a corneal graft on a blind person who later saw. I watched with one-eyed fascination as Dr Thomas Szasz, author of *The Myth of Mental Illness*, performed a similar operation on the body of Established Opinion on the Subject of Madness, as represented by Jonathan Miller in **States of Mind** (BBC2) — except that, this time, it was me who saw.

Surgeons may operate on an eye, says Szasz; they cannot operate on the mind, which is an idea, not a bodily organ. The problem is one of religious toleration, a thing we have less of here than we thought. For what psychiatrists do today is no different from what the Spanish Inquisition did in the 17th century: impose religious orthodoxy on a dissenting minority. Or is it? The argument was spun gold, with Miller turning the spindle as slowly as he dared without frustrating the creative flow of the brilliant, spidery Szasz.

According to Szasz, we lock up our social dissidents in the West just as they do in Russia and just as illegally. Our ignorance of mental illness has grown in proportion to our scientific knowledge of physical illness. I was fascinated to learn that our approach to bodily sickness as tissue lesion only dates from about 1800; before that it was still widely seen as an imbalance of humours. It might be as well to remember this when listening to those doctors who imagine (the metaphor of) modern science to be somehow immune to the passage of time.

Anyway, primed with my new widsom I was in no mood to read in the *Guardian* that the 'hollow centre' of **The Silent Twins** (BBC2), a film based on the true story and writings of black teenage twins from Wales who refused to speak except to each other, was that 'the twins were actually mad'. Nancy Banks Smith seems to have missed the point completely: that the twins were natural performance artists, dedicated to transforming their lives from within. Long before Gilbert and George painted their faces gold and stood around at parties saying nothing, Jennifer and June were synchronising mournfully slow movements for school, remaining motionless for hours on end like the black-clad cowboy on Hollywood Boulevard and, with incredible stamina and rightness, offering no commentary whatever on their work to a world that should have been amazed and delighted by them, but sought only to suppress or 'cure' them. 'We knew that we just had to get through these barren years to achieve recognition,' wrote one of the girls in their voluminous notebooks.

They seem to have had an over-developed sense of life's exhilarating absurdities and used to spend hours on end watching jets take off out at the American Air Force base. 'Our hearts are alive with zest, two young coloured girls in love with freedom . . .' When a misguided bureaucracy seeks to break up the act by separating them, the two halves turn on each other: 'One of us is plotting to kill one of us,' one of them wrote. In desperation, they turn to arson: 'Our time of dangerous living had lasted only five short weeks but it seemed like an eternity. Finally, our patience was rewarded.' Tricked into pleading guilty, they are labelled psychopaths and bundled off to Broadmoor. Till the end they are optimistic. 'All I need do now is wait for the word "success" to take shape. I am happy. I am on my way to the land of hope and glory.'

Who knows, perhaps they were right. It would be surprising if the film and the book combined did not inspire a number of budding performance artists up and down the country to take up the twins' dedication and example and transform their lives into art like the visionaries, saints and holy fools before them. As for the twins themselves, they have been martyred to our present-day Inquisition, their dual nature split down the middle by separation and their art murdered by 'major tranquillisers'. We learnt at the end of the film that they have even stopped writing now.

Despite all this, Nancy Banks Smith finds 'the patience shown by parents, teachers, doctors and social workers . . . little less than angelic. White nighties and blinding lights would have been in order.' In her hearty, And-how-are-we-this-morning? prose style she asserts that the twins' behaviour — 'obsessive, observant and ingrown' — 'has confirmed me in my decision not to become a serious creative writer.' I wonder was it ever seriously on the cards?

Another artist who turned her life into an incredible 'true story' was Josephine Baker. Born in a St Louis slum in 1906, she started dancing 'to keep warm', got married twice before she was 16, probably for the same reason, and became a comedian to escape the poverty and segregation of a gallant South dominated by Ku Klux Klansmen and/or racist policemen.

Her fame is currently being upgraded in nearly every magazine on sale, so I won't rehash her life story for a review. Apart from an annoying little 'social historian' called Alain Weill offering super-obvious comments for the American market while stroking his cat, **Chasing a Rainbow** (C4) was the ideal compilation, including recently discovered hand-tinted film of the original 'banana dance' with which she first made her name in Paris.

Unlike Chevalier and Mistinguette, who were both soon back at work after the occupation, Baker, abhorred by the Nazis, disappeared into the Resistance only to return after the war with near-mythical status. An ungallant conclusion to any round-up of her life might point out the irony of the brave Civil Rights campaigner who refused to play in front of segregated audiences on her return to New York in 1951 taking part in the reactionary, pro-Gaullist march following the student riots in 1968, but Baker was a creature of fire and air. 'I like to compare her to the sun,' said a latterday companion. 'For the public, protected by the orchestra pit, it was wonderful, not too hot and not too light. Beautiful.' You felt that he himself may have been scorched. □

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Weekend competition

No 2908 **Set by Ms de Meaner**

The manufacturers of chocolate eggs may have been trying since Boxing Day to persuade us of Easter's imminence, but one swallow of cocoa mass, emulsifier (Lecithin), flavouring, etc, will not, alas, make it spring. We do, however, have St Valentine's Day around the corner. Simultaneously, from Penguin Books, we have the extraordinarily handsome offer of Joseph Connolly's *The Book Quiz Book* ('In which series of books did Mr Wilkins quite often go "I — I — Cor — Wumph."?', etc.) as a prize for successful compers. Combining literature and lust, then, could you compose a love letter from one fictional character to an apparently unlikely other — i.e. Elizabeth Bennet to James Bond — in a style appropriate to the sender? Max. 120 words (or 12 lines of verse) by 6 February.

No 2905 **Set by Mercy Dash**

Tell-tale sequences of three book titles.

Report **By Di Dact**

Briefly, a first-class entry, even though the number of sequences ending in *Gone with the Wind* bespeaks a *kindergarten* obsession with flatulence. Three pounds apiece to the winners below and could those awaiting E.O. Parrott's *How to Become . . .* be patient — the book has been so successful that it's temporarily out of print.

Mr Norris Changes Trains; Loose Connections; By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept.
PETER NORMAN

The Road to Wigan Pier; Journey without Maps; Why Are We in Vietnam?
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

The Waves; That Uncertain Feeling; A Question of Upbringing.
MARIAN MILLS

Jake's Thing; The Razor's Edge; Shame.
RUSSELL LUCAS

The Good Terrorist; The Grass is Singing; Crime and Punishment.
V. ERNEST COX

In Between the Sheets; Bliss; Much Obliged, Jeeves.
GEORGE SIMMERS

A Night Out; Casanova's Chinese Restaurant; They Shoot Horses, Don't They?
WILL BELLENGER

The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze; Under the Net; For Whom the Bell Tolls.
R.J. PICKLES

Goodbye Columbus; A Passage to India; Amerika.
NORMAN GERAS

The Choirboys; Hard Times; A Kid for Two Farthings.
DENNIS THORP

The American Dream; The War of the Worlds; A Handful of Dust.
YVONNE REED

Westward Ho!; The Last of the Mohicans; All Quiet on the Western Front.
KATIE MALLETT

Foreign Land; The Needs of Strangers; Writing Home.
JOHN STANLEY

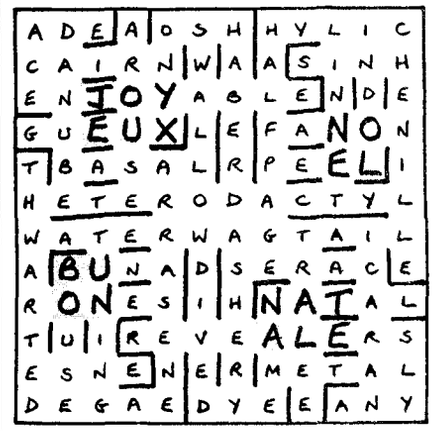
A Maggot; Metamorphosis; Lord of the Flies.
D.A. PRINCE

Great Expectations; Wilt; The End of the Affair.
TOM DONNELLY

Hunger; Breakfast at Tiffany's; Nausea.
LISSA EVANS

The Pursuit of Love; Bleak House; Fanny by Gaslight.
MARGARET ROGERS

Solution to Salamanca 102



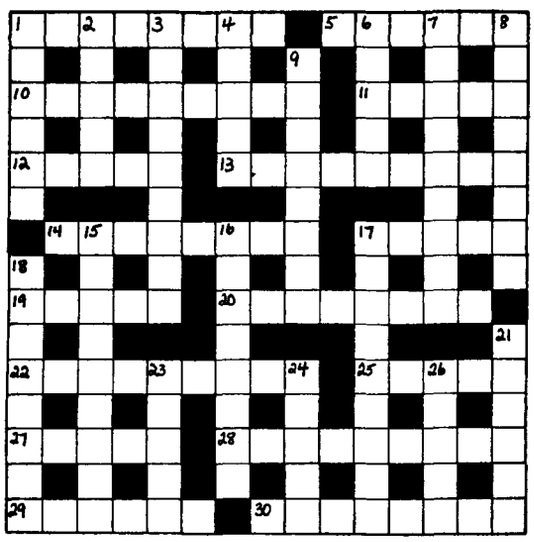
Omitted letters spell FOREIGN GREETINGS.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 102

C. A. Baker (Milnathort, (Kinross-shire)
Ian McGivering (Ilkley, W. Yorks.)
Neville Mellon (Stratford-upon-Avon)

Weekend Crossword 1506

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1506, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 4 February.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

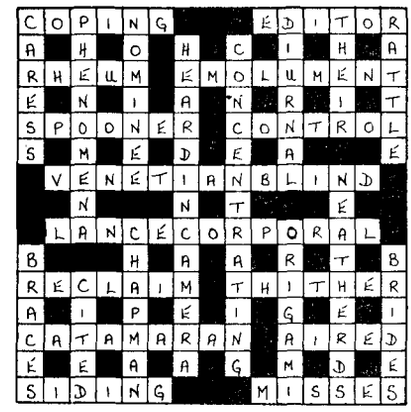
1 It is not easy to give financial support to such a book (8)
5 Criticised for being badly made by the motor manufacturer (6)
10 Dance which sounds as if it would do for the lake-lover (9)
11 Bulb which may be lit up (5)
13 Chalk a hundred less for the material (5)
15 Claimant has the PM's place at heart (9)
14 Garment needed by one entering the river alone (8)
17 Iron is about to strike something hot (5)
19 Tolled softly for the accident (5)
20 Abuse when it contains taller possibilities (8)
22 Rest back among the pursued and punished (9)
25 Groups of religious people, lots of which are about a hundred (5)
27 So these ceremonies would form a string of propositions (5)
28 Poem about mountains and a drink (9)
29 It is most painful so keep still (6)
30 Characteristics which turn out safe and true (8)

DOWN

1 Somewhere to get a drink in a very warm place (6)
2 Recover from a series of strikes (5)
3 Maintaining equilibrium by getting a degree at school (9)
4 Short or curly (5)
6 Articles consigned to oblivion (5)
7 Some acts which could be made moral (9)
8 The act about drink sees one expelled (8)
9 Where to be a good cook? (8)
15 Material for one who survives without a degree (9)
16 Failure for love errand (8)
17 Prudence as a means to accuracy in battle (9)
18 Persons of refined taste discover broken pieces around an ancient city (8)
21 Weigh animals before steeplechase starts (6)
23 Street radio turned up for sporting events (5)
24 The bird for a sailor (5)
26 Preside with high honour over broadcasting (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1504



Prizewinners to 1504

W. A. Downward (Manchester)
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102/4 Sheen Road, Richmond,
Surrey TW9 1UF, (Atten **Mrs P. R. Davis**)

'EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES REVIEW'
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REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermillion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822. N49.24

STATESMAN BACK numbers 19/10/79 to date. Some numbers missing – list available. Offers. Box (04) 2259 N04.6

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Informal short talk & questions. 'Cycles & Cyclic Law' 8 p.m. 26 Jan. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL. N04.7

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Tel: Laura Berryman 01-251 5487

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EVEN AGATHA GOT A MAN, after reading Successful Blind Dating! All unattached must read it immediately. 150 packed pages. £10 post-paid, or SAE more details. GOLDWAYS (NS5), 23 Colebrook Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9BS N04.16

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MAN, 30, with large piano, seeks original thinking, creative lady, in any field or profession, to make new home together. Anywhere. Box (03)2218. N03.40

PROFESSIONAL LADY, early 40s, varied interests, including arts and travel, would like to meet unattached, cultured gentleman, for warm friendship. London area. Box (04)2255. N04.23

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 36, used but not worn, kind, witty, generous, solemn-understanding, even-tempered, politically liberal but open to persuasion, almost viceless, going to waste in West Yorks: apply now Box (04)2247 N04.24

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PROFESSIONAL, PhD, 30, youthful, varied interests, needs a lady, purpose friendship, relationship. London based but can travel. Box (04)2229. N04.26

SELECT FRIENDS the Introduction Agency that interviews the people you will meet. Further information: Select Friends, 58 Maddox St, London W1. 01-493 9937. N1.1

SENSITIVE, SENSUOUS, professional graduate woman, early fifties, attractive, slim, youthful, non-smoking, humorous, relaxed, loving, seeks matching unattached man, friendship or more. London. Box (04)2246. N04.27

THE BICYCLE THIEF. Alec Guinness, Louis Armstrong, The Impressionists, Bach, The Observer – if these mean something to you and you are a caring man, with a good sense of humour, between 40 and 60, we may have a basis for exploring relationships, the *countryside. London based.* Box (04)2231. N04.28

TALL, SLIM, attractive, professional woman, aged 48, seeks similar male, sense of humour essential, with a view to friendship/marriage. London area. Box (03)2219. N03.38

VERY ATTRACTIVE, personable female, wide interests, seeks professional/academic/unmarried male equivalent, 40s, East Midlands or thereabouts. Returnable photo appreciated. All replies answered. Box (04)2227. N04.29

WANTED TO MEET: committed Christian, believer in simple living, peace movement. Interested languages, India, male/female, by lonely, depressed female, 41. Box (04)2242. N04.30

WANTED: warm-hearted, socialist woman, interested in music and the open air, who is looking for active male in his mid 60s. London/Middlesex area. Box (04)2235. N04.31

WARM, AFFECTIONATE man (36), would love to meet a young woman, up to 45, both for an affectionate, warm, loving, mutually supportive friendship, and for a lusty imaginative, uninhibited sexual relationship, where we are gentle, sensitive, considerate, caring and loving with each other. Informative letter, photo, address/tel. no., please, to John. ALA. London area. Box (04)2256. N04.32

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WEST YORKSHIRE woman, Jewish, socialist, writer, seeks a relationship with a left-wing, affectionate man (30-40), who is preferably tall and fond of children. Box (03)2201. N03.31

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AGENDA

FOR DETAILS CALL DAVID JONES 01-251 5487

SAT 25 JAN

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOCIAL SECURITY CUTS – 'National Conference to Fight Fowler.' Manchester University Students' Union, Oxford Road, Manchester. Speakers: Gordon Brown MP, others to be confirmed. Briefing on Social Security White Paper. Workshops, future strategy. Creche, wheelchair access, accommodation. Contact: Lucy Walker 01-379 6142.

DEMO AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION. From London Fields, Mare Street, Hackney E8. 12 noon. No to the Public Order Bill! No to the Police Act! No to the Prevention of Terrorism Act! General enquiries: Steve 881 2938. Creche 833 4996. A legal briefing will be handed out on the Demo.

SOCIETY OF LABOUR LAWYERS (East Midland Region). The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 7.00pm followed at 7.30pm by an open meeting addressed by Gerald Kaufman, M.P., Shadow Spokesman on Home Affairs. All interested Labour Party sympathisers are welcome to attend at the Labour Club, 26, Charnwood Street, Derby.

SUN 26 JAN

'DON'T ENTERTAIN APARTHEID — SUPPORT THE CULTURAL BOYCOTT'. Public meeting organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement and Performers Against Racism, at Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre, Morpeth Terrace, London SW1 (off Victoria Street). 3-6pm. **Speakers** from Performers against Racism, African National Congress, SWAPO of Namibia, SACTU, AAM. **Film** 'The Hammer and the Anvil'. Stalls, exhibitions, poetry. Refreshments. Creche. Disabled access. More information from: AAM, 13 Mandela Street, London NW1 Tel: 01-387 7966.

MON 27 JAN

WHAT DOES STAR WARS MEAN FOR EUROPE. A talk by Mary Kaldor at the Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London. 6.30pm. Adm. free. Organised by Book Action for Nuclear Disarmament. Details 01-602 7558.

TUES 28 JAN

GREEN POLITICS

An 8 week evening course starting on **Tuesday 28 January, 6-8.45 pm.**

The course will provide a critical examination of the main areas of concern to the Green Movement and offer an appraisal of its policies and proposed political strategies.

Cost: £10 or £5 (unwaged).

Details from: The Secretary, City of London Polytechnic, Old Castle Street, London E1 7NT. Tel. 01-283 1030 extn 541.

WED 29 JAN

FAITH IN THE CITY. A major lecture series at St James's Church Piccadilly considers the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission's Report on the Urban Priority Areas. This week: **The Bishop of Sheffield, The Rt Revd David Lunn, "Cities fit for Heroes."** Details: 01-734 4511.

SAT 1 FEB

BAN SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS – NOT WINNIE MANDELA! Picket of South African Airways, Oxford Circus, WC1. 11.30am–1pm. Called by the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group.

CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS dayschool on Economics and Socialism. With Anna Coote, Maureen MacIntosh, Dave Morley, John Palmer, Hilary Wainwright, John Weeks. **At U.L.U., Malet Street, London WC1. 10-4. £2.50/£1.**

MON 3 FEB

PHILIPPINES SOLIDARITY BENEFIT. Philippine Women Support Committee present *The Torch (funky rock for dancing)* at The Pied Bull, 1 Liverpool Road, London N1. 8-12pm. £2.50/£1.50 conc. Everyone welcome.

SAT 22 FEB

ANTI-FACIST ACTION CONFERENCE. Help Organise The Fight Back. Write for details and credentials to: Anti-Facist Action, PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

FORTHCOMING

ART THERAPY DAYS WITH LIESL SILVERSTONE. Spaces on: Sun 16 March; Sun 11 May; Sat 7 June. From 10am-5pm. Cost £20 per day. Maximum no. 7. Info/booking/venue: Liesl Silverstone, 17 Cranbourne Gardens, NW11 0HN. 01-455 8570.

S.D.I. DEFENSIVE SHIELD OR DEADLY ESCALATION? Speakers include Prof. F. Pirani from King's College, University of London. At County Hall on 26 February from 6-9pm. Organised by Engineers for Nuclear Disarmament.

SOCIALIST SOCIETY AGM

Fri 24 Jan — 7.30pm
Round table discussion
Re-alignment for What?
Stuart Hall, Angela Weir, John Palmer, Mary Kaldor.
Chair: Hilary Wainwright.
Visitors 70p; 35p unwaged

Sat 25 Jan — 10am-5pm
Research, Education and Agitation: Policy Making from the Base.
Caroline Benn, Gareth Pierce, Anthony Barnett.
Chair: Anthony Arblaster.

Workshops: Policies for Peace • Full Employment & Democracy • International Aid and Development • Science & Technology • Realist Philosophy & Socialism • Prefigurative Organising • Local Government • Europe.

Creche, disabled access.

Details: Socialist Society, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Tel: 01-734 8501

Agenda costs only £5 for 25 words (extra words 30p each) inclusive of VAT.

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MISANTHROPIC MUSINGS : WORD GAMES
I FIND IT BEMUSING WHEN MEN START ANALYSING THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ME, ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT THEIR COMMITTMENT, OR LACK OF IT.
IT'S VERY ENLIGHTENING IF YOU SUBSTITUTE THE WORD 'WANT' FOR THE WORD 'COMMITTMENT'.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WELL, WHEN HE SAYS 'I DON'T FEEL COMMITTED ENOUGH TO GO ON WITH THE RELATIONSHIP' ALL THAT IT TRANSLATES TO IS —HE DOESN'T WANT TO
GIVES YOU SO MUCH MORE SCOPE TO THUMP HIM.
JANIS GOODMAN UK

CHESS

HAVE YOU ever tried playing blindfold chess? Knotting something round the head is not required, unless you wish to impress a sceptical audience. What is required is that you should play the game 'in your head' — i.e. without sight of the pieces on the board.

People who have never attempted the feat sometimes consider it almost supernatural. But it is not really all that difficult, given a little persistence, once you have a confident mastery of chess notation. The vital importance of fluency with the notation, the language of chess, is the main reason why I persist in surrounding diagrams with the co-ordinates a-h and 1-8. Once you have grasped such facts as that a5, c5, d4, d2, cl and al are all a knight's move away from b3 and that c2, e4 and g6 all lie along the same light-squared diagonal (bl-h7) you have acquired the basic equipment for playing blindfold. If you have solved a problem with a main line 5 or 6 moves deep straight from the diagram, you are already well on the way to playing the inner game.

The simplest way of developing the ability is to try to follow the score of a game without playing it through on a set. If you aim to play at master level this is indispensable training, as it is the most effective method of strengthening powers of analysis and calculation. Those unpricked by the spur of competitive ambition will at least find the skill useful as an aid to staving off tedium in dentists' waiting rooms, on train journeys, at dull parties, etc.

From a more theoretical angle, the availability of the skill raises interesting psychological issues. In spite of the prevalence of visual metaphors, 'seeing' — as when one 'sees' a threat — need have little to do with perceptual vision. Yet when discussing the thought-processes of chessplayers (and others too, for that matter) there is a standing temptation to lapse into naively imagistic psychology and assume that we operate by means of sequences of inner pictures. But it can hardly be like that for blind players, and you will find, unless you run on a programme quite different from mine, that playing a game in one's head is a matter of remembering the relationship between pieces, rather than visualizing a board with pieces on, as you might visualize the Taj Mahal by moonlight. You may well come to wonder what the material props are needed for at all. Basically, I suppose, as an aid to the memory, the main difficulty for the blindfold player being that he may not be able to recall accurately where all the pieces have gone to.

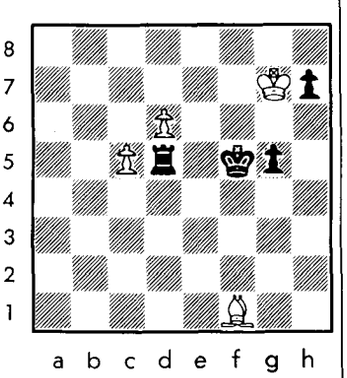
The demands on the memory-banks are such that playing several games blindfold simultaneously is a pretty impressive feat. Nobody nowadays seems inclined to try to outdo Flesch's record of 52 simultaneous blindfold games, set in 1960. I would not recommend the attempt, as our feeble brains can only cope with so much.

But you could try blindfolding your way through this game, which is the main reason why Timman edged Tal out of the candidates' semi-finals:

Timman-Tal, 2nd game, Candidates Play-off, Montpellier 1985. QGA. 1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. e4 e5. 4. Nf3 exd4 5. Bxc4 Bb4 + 6. Nbd2 Nc6 7. 0-0 Qf6 8. e5 Qg6 9. Nh4 Qg4 10. Ndf3 Be6 11. h3 Qe4 12. Bd3 Qd5 13. Ng5 Be7 14. Be4 Qd7 15. Nxe6 Qxe6 16. Bxc6 + bxc6 17. Qxd4 Rd8 18. Qa4 Bc5 19. Qc2 Rd5 20. b4! Bd4 21. Nf5! Bxe5 22. Rel Kf8 23. Bb2 Qxf5 24. Qxf5 Bh2 + 25. Kxh2 Rxf5 26. Radl Rd5 27. Rxd5 cxd5 28. Rcl 1-0.

Problem

White to play and draw.



Solution

1. Bg2! Rxc5 2. d7 Rc7 3. Kh6 Rxd7 4. Bh3 + g4 5. Bxg4 + Kxg4 stalemate (Troitsky, 1911). A false trail is 1. Kf7 Rxc5 2. d7 Rd5 3. Ke7 h5 4. d8 = Q Rxd8 5. Kxd8 g4, when Black wins.

George Botterill

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QUIZ

1) Which defunct rock group won about £1 million in royalties last week after settling a case against their former manager?
2) Which sportsman was revealed last week to have been left a legacy of £100,000 by one of his fans?
3) Which sportsman announced last week that he intended to spend a week running along the Great Wall of China to raise money for charity?
4) What sporting event took place in the Albert Hall after the Westland shareholders' meeting last week?
5) Which cathedral announced last week that from March it will charge an entrance fee of £1.50?
6) Which MP was revealed last week to have sold the entire wheat crop from his Yorkshire farm into the EEC grain mountain?
7) Which MP said to which other MP last week 'You should feel ashamed of yourself, you stinking little swine!?
8) Which country last week became the last in Europe to give diplomatic recognition to the state of Israel?
9) Which country recently banned breakdancing and rock music because they are 'ugly and disgusting'?

Answers

1) Sex Pistols; 2) Geoffrey Boycott; 3) Ian Botham; 4) a wrestling match; 5) Ely; 6) Michael Jopling; 7) Eric Heffer to Roy Hattersley; 8) Spain; 9) Burma.

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There's one Lynx the fur trade won't be able to kill.

We are a new anti-fur group. In fact, we are the only national group solely devoted to fighting the fur trade.

Our aim is to stop the cruel and totally unnecessary slaughter of tens of millions of animals.

To do this, however, we'll need more than good intentions.

Fortunately, we already own the exclusive rights to use the famous "Dumb Animals" poster and cinema commercial.

And currently, David Bailey is helping us produce another equally powerful poster.

These together with radical direct action, persistent lobbying, education and a constant effort aimed to attract media attention will form the basis for our overall campaign.

To put this into effect, though, we'll need your support as well.

You can help by sending a donation now to the address below.

In return, we'll send you full details of our campaign, and regular newsletters containing information on how you can help.

(As a special offer to readers of this magazine, we'll also send you the new Lynx T-shirt if you donate £7.50 or over.)

For once, a Lynx could end up killing off the fur trade.

Rather than the other way round.

I enclose a donation of ___ ___ to help Lynx stop the fur trade.
Please send me full details of your campaign.

Name ___

Address ___

Please post to: Lynx, PO Box 509, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1UH.
Receipts will not be issued, except on request.

NS 1

LYNX

Fighting the fur trade.

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